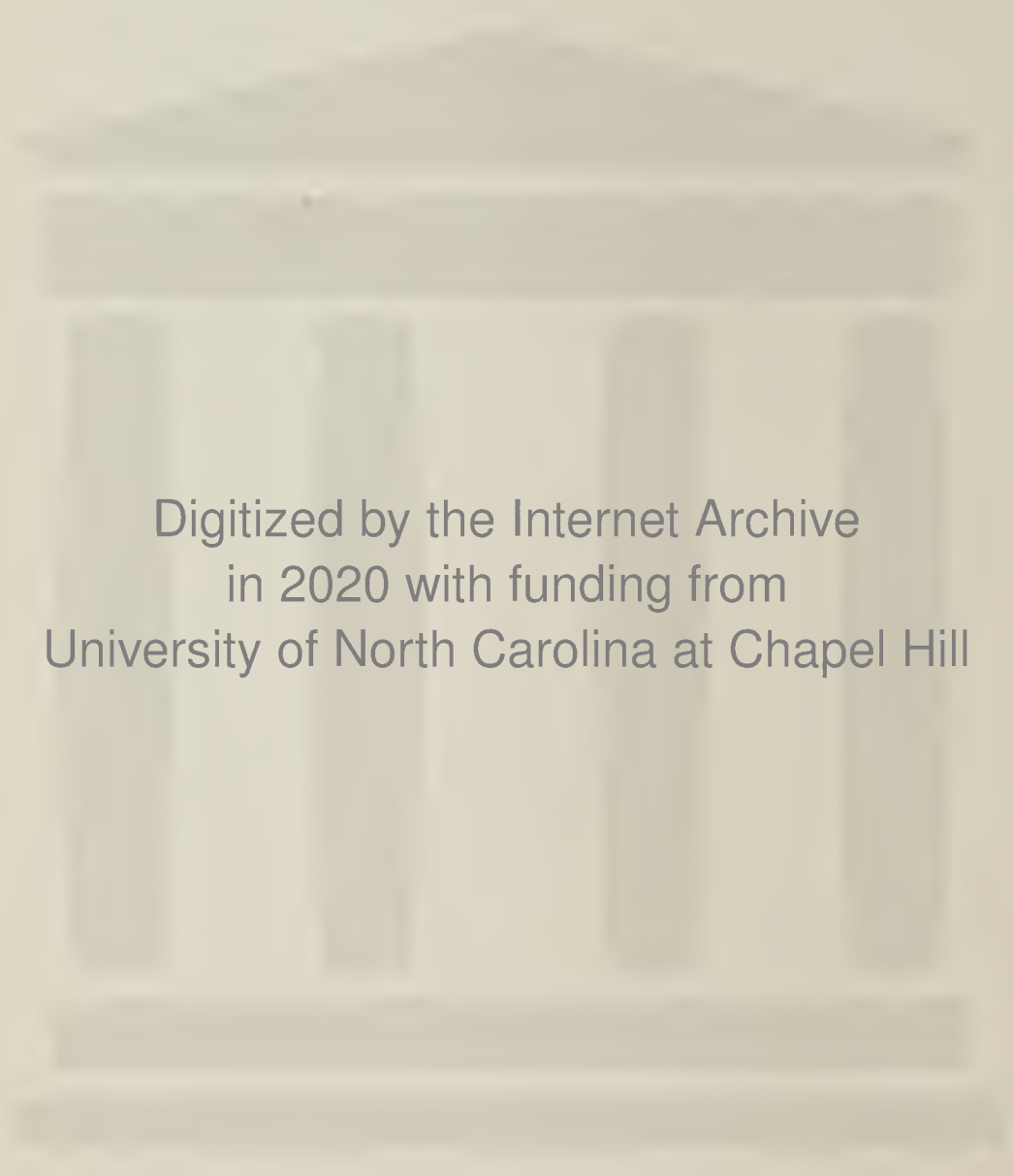


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BEAUTIES OF DICKENS.

A Selection of Beautiful Thoughts

FROM THE WORKS OF

CHARLES DICKENS.

BY

ALFRED I. HOLMES.



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PREFACE.

I BELIEVE there are many readers of "Dickens" who, like myself, having read his works, will take pleasure in perusing again the many beautiful thoughts which awakened those pleasing and varied emotions which his writings inspire. Perhaps no other author has had the faculty of entering into such personal relations with all his readers. His quick sense of humor and of pathos, his vivacity, his conception of grotesque characters, the flowing of his genius in characterization; his creations of "Little Nell," "Em'ly," and others, have made him a writer without peer in the domain of literature.

A judicious compilation will be, without doubt, a public benefit, as affording not only the means of deriving amusement for leisure hours, but also as adding to the means of literary culture.

In order to avoid dividing my work into innumerable small chapters, I have thought best to supply a chapter on "Promiscuous," which will be found to contain many choice thoughts.

The work is the result of many months' labor, and I trust it will find its way into every home where Dickens has a friend.

THE AUTHOR.

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BEAUTIES OF DICKENS.

WITTICISMS.

CHAPTER I.

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

“**Y**OU have a son, I believe?” said Mr. Dombey.
“Four on ’em, sir. Four hims and a her. All alive!”

“Why, it’s as much as you can afford to keep them!” said Mr. Dombey.

“I couldn’t hardly afford but one thing in the world less, sir.”

“What is that?”

“To lose ’em, sir.”

“Can you read?” asked Mr. Dombey.

“Why, not partick’ler, sir.”

“Write?”

“With chalk, sir?”

“With anything?”

“I could make shift to chalk a little bit, I think, if I was put to it,” said Toodle, after some reflection.

“And yet,” said Mr. Dombey, “you are two or three and thirty, I suppose?”

“Thereabouts, I suppose, sir,” answered Toodle, after more reflection.

"Then why don't you learn?" asked Mr. Dombey.

"So I'm a-going to, sir. One of my little boys is a-going to learn me, when he's old enough, and been to school himself."

"Well!" said Mr. Dombey, after looking at him attentively, and with no great favor, as he stood gazing round the room (principally round the ceiling), and still drawing his hand across and across his mouth. "You heard what I said to your wife just now?"

"Polly heerd it," said Toodle, jerking his hat over his shoulder in the direction of the door, with an air of perfect confidence in his better half. "It's all right."

"As you appear to leave everything to her," said Mr. Dombey, frustrated in his intention of impressing his views still more distinctly on the husband, as the stronger character, "I suppose it is of no use my saying anything to you."

"Not a bit," said Toodle. "Polly heerd it. *She's* awake, sir."

"I won't detain you any longer then," returned Mr. Dombey, disappointed. "Where have you worked all your life?"

"Mostly underground, sir, 'till I got married. I come to the level then. I'm a-going on one of these here railroads when they comes into full play."

As the last straw breaks the laden camel's back, this piece of underground information crushed the sinking spirits of Mr. Dombey.

"**B**UT he's chock-full of science," he observed, waving his hook towards the stock-in-trade. "Look 'ye here! Here's a collection of 'em. Earth, air, or water. It's all one. Only say where you'll have it. Up in a balloon? There you are. Down in a bell? There you are. D'ye want to put the North Star in a pair of scales and weigh it? He'll do it for you."

It may be gathered from these remarks that Captain Cuttle's

reverence for the stock of instruments was profound, and that his philosophy knew little or no distinction between trading in it and inventing it.

“Ah!” he said, with a sigh, “it’s a fine thing to understand ’em. And yet it’s a fine thing not to understand ’em. I hardly know which is best. It’s so comfortable to sit here and feel that you might be weighed, measured, magnified, electrified, polarized, played the very devil with, and never know how.”

WHENEVER a young gentleman was taken in hand by Doctor Blimber, he might consider himself sure of a pretty tight squeeze. The Doctor only undertook the charge of ten young gentlemen, but he had always ready a supply of learning for a hundred, on the lowest estimate; and it was at once the business and delight of his life to gorge the unhappy ten with it.

In fact, Doctor Blimber’s establishment was a great hot-house, in which there was a forcing apparatus incessantly at work. All the boys blew before their time. Mental green peas were produced at Christmas, and intellectual asparagus all the year round. Mathematical gooseberries (very sour ones too) were common at untimely seasons, and from mere sprouts of bushes, under Doctor Blimber’s cultivation. Every description of Greek and Latin vegetable was got off the driest twigs of boys, under the frostiest circumstances. Nature was of no consequence at all. No matter what a young gentleman was intended to bear, Doctor Blimber made him bear to pattern, somehow or other.

This was all very pleasant and ingenious, but the system of forcing was attended with its usual disadvantages. There was not the right taste about the premature productions, and they didn’t keep well. Moreover, one young gentleman, with a swollen nose and an excessively large head (the oldest of the ten who had “gone through” everything), suddenly left off blowing one day, and remained in the establishment a mere

stalk. And people did say that the Doctor had rather overdone it with young Toots, and that when he began to have whiskers he left off having brains.

“**A**ND how *is* master, Rob?” said Polly.

“Well, I don’t know, mother; not much to boast on. There ain’t no bis’ness done, you see. He don’t know anything about it, the Cap’en don’t. There was a man come into the shop this very day, and says, ‘I want a so-and-so,’ he says—some hard name or another. ‘A which?’ says the Cap’en. ‘A so-and-so,’ says the man. ‘Brother,’ says the Cap’en, ‘will you take a observation round the shop?’ ‘Well,’ says the man, ‘I’ve done it.’ ‘Do you see what you want?’ says the Cap’en. ‘No, I don’t,’ says the man. ‘Do you know it when you *do* see it?’ says the Cap’en. ‘No, I don’t,’ says the man. ‘Why, then, I tell you wot, my lad,’ says the Cap’en, ‘you’d better go back and ask wot it’s like outside, for no more don’t I!’”

“That ain’t the way to make money, though, is it?” said Polly.

“**C**APTAIN GILLS,” said Mr. Toots, gesticulating violently with the hand in which he held his hat: “Admiration is not the word. Upon my honor, you have no conception what my feelings are. If I could be dyed black, and made Miss Dombey’s slave, I should consider it a compliment. If, at the sacrifice of all my property, I could get transmigrated into Miss Dombey’s dog,—I—I really think I should never leave off wagging my tail. I should be so perfectly happy, Captain Gills!”

Mr. Toots said it with watery eyes, and pressed his hat against his bosom with deep emotion.

“**B**UNSBY!” said the Captain, appealing to him solemnly: “what do you make of this? There you sit, a man as has had his head broke from infancy up’ards, and has got a

new opinion into it at every seam as has been opened. Now, what do you make o' this?"

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

“**M**R. PICKWICK, mother,” said Mr. Wardle, at the very top of his voice.

“Ah!” said the old lady, shaking her head; “I can’t hear you.”

“Mr. Pickwick, grandma!” screamed both the young ladies together.

“Ah!” exclaimed the old lady. “Well; it don’t much matter. He don’t care for an old ’ooman like me, I dare say.”

“I assure you, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick, grasping the old lady’s hand, and speaking so loud that the exertion imparted a crimson hue to his benevolent countenance, “I assure you, ma’am, that nothing delights me more than to see a lady of your time of life heading so fine a family, and looking so young and well.”

“Ah!” said the old lady, after a short pause; “it’s all very fine, I dare say; but I can’t hear him.”

“**B**LESS my soul!” said Mr. Pickwick, as they stood upon the pavement while the coats were being put in. “Bless my soul! who’s to drive? I never thought of that.”

“Oh! you, of course,” said Mr. Tupman.

“Of course,” said Mr. Snodgrass.

“I!” exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

“Not the slightest fear, sir,” interposed the hostler. “War-rant him quiet, sir; a hinfant in arms might drive him.”

“He don’t shy, does he?” inquired Mr. Pickwick.

“Shy, sir?—he wouldn’t shy if he was to meet a vaggin-load of monkeys with their tails burnt off.”

“PERSON’S a-waitin’,” said Sam, epigrammatically.
“Does the person want me, Sam?” inquired Mr. Pickwick.

“He wants you partick’lar; and no one else ’ll do, as the Devil’s private secretary said ven he fetched away Doctor Faustus,” replied Mr. Weller.

“I SEE some queer sights there.”
“Ah, I suppose you did,” said Mr. Pickwick, with an air of considerable interest.

“Sights, sir,” resumed Mr. Weller, “as ’ud penetrate your benevolent heart, and come out on the other side. You don’t see the reg’lar wagrants there; trust ’em, they knows better than that. Young beggars, male and female, as hasn’t made a rise in their profession, takes up their quarters there sometimes; but it’s generally the worn-out, starving, houseless creatures as rolls themselves in the dark corners o’ them lonesome places—poor creeturs as an’t up to the twopenny rope.”

“And pray, Sam, what is the twopenny rope?” inquired Mr. Pickwick.

“The twopenny rope, sir,” replied Mr. Weller, “is just a cheap lodgin’-house, where the beds is twopence a night.”

“What do they call a bed a rope for?” said Mr. Pickwick.

“Bless your innocence, sir, that an’t it,” replied Sam. “Wen the lady and gen’l’m’n as keeps the hot-el first began business they used to make the beds on the floor; but this wouldn’t do at no price, ’cos instead o’ taking a moderate twopenn’orth o’ sleep, the lodgers used to lie there half the day. So now they has two ropes, ’bout six foot apart, and three from the floor, which goes right down the room; and the beds are made of slips of coarse sacking, stretched across ’em.”

“Well,” said Mr. Pickwick.

“Well,” said Mr. Weller, “the advantage o’ the plan’s hobvious. At six o’clock every mornin’ they lets go the ropes at one end, and down falls all the lodgers. ’Consequence is, that

being thoroughly waked, they get up wery quietly, and walk away ! ”

“ **Y**OU are quite a philosopher, Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick. “ It runs in the family, I b’lieve, sir,” replied Mr. Weller. “ My father’s wery much in that line now. If my mother-in-law blows him up, he whistles. She flies in a passion, and breaks his pipe : he steps out and gets another. Then she screams wery loud, and falls into ’sterics : and he smokes wery comfortably ’till she comes too agin. That’s philosophy, sir, ain’t it ? ”

“ **W**EAL pie,” said Mr. Weller, soliloquizing, as he arranged the eatables on the grass. “ Wery good thing is weal pie, when you know the lady as made it, and is quite sure it an’t kittens ; and arter all, though, where’s the odds, when they’re so like weal that the wery piemen themselves don’t know the difference ? ”

“ Don’t they, Sam ? ” said Mr. Pickwick.

“ Not they, sir,” replied Mr. Weller, touching his hat. “ I lodged in the same house with a pieman once, sir, and a wery nice man he was—reg’lar clever chap, too—make pies out o’ anything he could. ‘ What a number o’ cats you keep, Mr. Brooks,’ says I, when I’d got intimate with him. ‘ Ah,’ says he, ‘ I do—a good many,’ says he. ‘ You must be wery fond o’ cats,’ says I. ‘ Other people is,’ says he, a-winkin’ at me : ‘ they an’t in season ’till the winter, though,’ says he. ‘ Not in season ! ’ says I. ‘ No,’ says he, ‘ fruits is in, cats is out.’ ‘ Why, what do you mean ? ’ says I. ‘ Mean ? ’ says he. ‘ That I’ll never be a party to the combination o’ the butchers, to keep up the prices o’ meat,’ says he. ‘ Mr. Weller,’ says he, a-squeezing my hand wery hard, and vispering in my ear—‘ don’t mention this here agin—but it’s the seasonin’ as does it. They’re

all made o' them noble animals,' says he, a-pointin' to a wery nice little tabby kitten—'and I seasons 'em for beefsteak, weal, or kidney, 'cordin' to the demand. And more than that,' says he, 'I can make a weal a beefsteak, or a beefsteak a kidney, or any on 'em a mutton, at a minute's notice, just as the market changes and appetites wary!'"

"**Y**OU'RE wery good, sir," replied Mr. W., stopping short; "perhaps a small glass of brandy to drink your health, and success to Sammy, sir, wouldn't be amiss."

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Pickwick. "A glass of brandy here!" The brandy was brought, and Mr. Weller, after pulling his hair to Mr. Pickwick, and nodding to Sam, jerked it down his capacious throat as if it had been a small thimble-full.

"Well done, father," said Sam, "take care, old fellow, or you'll have a touch of your old complaint, the gout."

"I've found a sov'rin cure for that, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, setting down the glass.

"A sovereign cure for the gout," said Mr. Pickwick, hastily producing his note-book; "what is it?"

"The gout, sir," replied Mr. Weller, "the gout is a complaint as arises from too much ease and comfort. If ever you're attacked with the gout, sir, jist you marry a widder as has got a good loud voice, with a decent notion of usin' it, and you'll never have the gout agin. It's a capital prescription, sir. I takes it reg'lar, and I can warrant it to drive away any illness as is caused by too much jollity." Having imparted this valuable secret, Mr. Weller drained his glass once more, produced a labored wink, sighed deeply, and slowly retired.

"Well, what do you think of what your father says, Sam?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, with a smile.

"Think, sir!" replied Mr. Weller; "why, I think he's the victim o' connubiality, as Blue Beard's domestic chaplain said, with a tear of pity, ven he buried him."

“**I** AM very glad to see that you have so high a sense of your duties as a son, Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick.

“I always had, sir,” replied Mr. Weller.

“That’s a very gratifying reflection, Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick, approvingly.

“Wery, sir,” replied Mr. Weller; “if ever I wanted anythin’ o’ my father, I always asked for it in a wery ’spectful and obligin’ manner. If he didn’t give it me, I took it, for fear I should be led to do anythin’ wrong, through not havin’ it. I saved him a world o’ trouble in this way, sir.”

“That’s not precisely what I meant, Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick, shaking his head, with a slight smile.

“All good feelin’, sir—the wery best intentions, as the gen’l’m’n said ven he run away from his wife ’cos she seemed unhappy with him,” replied Mr. Weller.

“**T**HERE,” said Sam, throwing in the last carpet-bag. There they are !”

“Yes,” said the fat boy, in a very satisfied tone, “there they are.”

“Vell, young twenty stun,” said Sam, “you’re a nice specimen of a prize boy, you are !”

“Thank’ee,” said the fat boy.

“You ain’t got nothin’ on your mind as makes you fret yourself, have you ?” inquired Sam.

“Not as I knows on,” replied the fat boy.

“I should rayther ha’ thought, to look at you, that you was a laborin’ under an unrequited attachment to some young ’ooman,” said Sam.

The fat boy shook his head.

“Vell,” said Sam, “I’m glad to hear it. Do you ever drink anythin’ ?”

“I likes eating, better,” replied the boy.

“Ah,” said Sam, “I should ha’ s’posed that: but what I mean is, should you like a drop of anythin’ as ’d warm you ?”

but I s'pose you never was cold, with all them elastic fixtures, was you?"

"I'LL tell you what it is, young boa constructor," said Mr. Weller, impressively; "if you don't sleep a little less, and exercise a little more, wen you comes to be a man you'll lay yourself open to the same sort of personal inconvenience as was inflicted on the old gen'l'm'n as wore the pigtail."

"What did they do to him?" inquired the fat boy, in a faltering voice.

"I'm a-goin' to tell you," replied Mr. Weller; "he was one o' the largest patterns as was ever turned out—reg'lar fat man, as hadn't caught a glimpse of his own shoes for five-and-forty year."

"Lor!" exclaimed Emma.

"No, that he hadn't, my dear," said Mr. Weller; "and if you'd put an exact model of his own legs on the dinin' table afore him, he wouldn't ha' known 'em. Well, he always walks to his office with a wery handsome gold watch-chain hanging out, about a foot and a quarter, and a gold watch in his fob pocket as was worth—I'm afraid to say how much, but as much as a watch can be—a large, heavy, round manafacter, as stout for a watch, as he was for a man, and with a big face in proportion. 'You'd better not carry that 'ere watch,' says the old gen'l'm'n's friends, 'you'll be robbed on it,' says they. 'Shall I?' says he. 'Yes, you will,' says they. 'Vell,' says he, 'I should like to see the thief as could get this here watch out, for I'm blest if I ever can, it's such a tight fit,' says he; 'and ven-ever I wants to know what's o'clock, I'm obliged to stare into the bakers' shops,' he says. Well, then he laughs as hearty as if he was a-goin' to pieces, and out he walks agin' with his powdered head and pigtail, and rolls down the Strand vith the chain hangin' out funder than ever, and the great round watch almost bustin' through his gray kersey smalls. There warn't a

pickpocket in all London as didn't take a pull at that chain, but the chain 'ud never break, and the watch 'ud never come out, so they soon got tired o' dragging such a heavy old gen'l'm'n along the pavement, and he'd go home and laugh till the pigtail wibrated like the penderlum of a Dutch clock.' At last, one day the old gen'l'm'n was a-rollin' along, and he sees a pickpocket as he know'd by sight, a-comin' up, arm in arm vith a little boy vith a wery large head. 'Here's a game,' said the old gen'l'm'n to himself, 'they're a-goin' to have another try, but it won't do!' So he begins a-chucklin' wery hearty, wen, all of a sudden, the little boy leaves hold of the pickpocket's arm, and rushes headforemost into the old gen'l'm'n's stomach, and for a moment doubles him right up vith the pain. 'Murder!' says the old gen'l'm'n. 'All right, sir,' says the pickpocket, a-wisperin' in his ear. And wen he come straight agin, the watch and chain was gone, and what's worse than that, the old gen'l'm'n's digestion was all wrong ever arterwards, to the wery last day of his life; so just you look about you, young feller, and take care you don't get too fat."

A BILL, by the by, is the most extraordinary locomotive engine that the genius of man ever produced. It would keep on running during the longest lifetime, without ever once stopping of its own accord.

LOOKING carefully at the pen to see that there were no hairs in it, and dusting down the table, so that there might be no crumbs of bread under the paper, Sam tucked up the cuffs of his coat, squared his elbows, and composed himself to write.

To ladies and gentlemen who are not in the habit of devoting themselves practically to the science of penmanship, writing a letter is no very easy task; it being always considered necessary in such cases for the writer to recline his head on his left

arm, so as to place his eyes as nearly as possible on a level with the paper, while glancing sideways at the letters he is constructing, to form with his tongue imaginary characters to correspond. These motions, although unquestionably of the greatest assistance to original composition, retard in some degree the progress of the writer ; and Sam had unconsciously been a full hour and a half writing words in small text, smearing out wrong letters with his little finger, and putting in new ones which required going over very often to render them visible through the old blots, when he was roused by the opening of the door and the entrance of his parent.

"Vell, Sammy," said the father.

"Vell, my Prooshan Blue," responded the son, laying down his pen. "What's the last bulletin about mother-in-law?"

"Mrs. Veller passed a very good night, but is uncommon perwerse and unpleasant this mornin'. Signed upon oath, S. Veller, Esquire, Senior. That's the last vun as was issued, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, untying his shawl.

"No better yet?" inquired Sam.

"All the symptoms aggerawated," replied Mr. Weller shaking his head. "But wot's that you're a-doin' of? Pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, Sammy?"

"I've done now," said Sam with slight embarrassment ; "I've been a-writin'."

"So I see," replied Mr. Weller. "Not to any young 'oman, I hope, Sammy?"

"Why it's no use sayin' it ain't," replied Sam ; "it's a valentine."

"A what!" exclaimed Mr. Weller, apparently horror-stricken by the word.

"A valentine," replied Sam.

"Samivel, Samivel," said Mr. Weller, in reproachful accents. "I didn't think you'd ha' done it. Arter the warnin' you've had o' your father's wicious propensities ; arter all I've said to you upon this here wery subject ; arter actiually seein' and bein' in the company o' your own mother-in-law, vich I

should ha' thought wos a moral lesson as no man could never ha' forgotten to his dyin' day! I didn't think you'd ha' done it, Sammy, I didn't think you'd ha' done it!" These reflections were too much for the good old man. He raised Sam's tumbler to his lips and drank off its contents.

"Wot's the matter now?" said Sam.

"Nev'r mind, Sammy," replied Mr. Weller, "it'll be a wery agonizin' trial to me at my time of life, but I'm pretty tough, that's vun consolation, as the wery old turkey remarked wen the farmer said he wos afeerd he should be obliged to kill him for the London market.

"Wot'll be a trial?" inquired Sam.

"To see you married, Sammy—to see you a dilluded wictim, and thinkin' in your innocence that it's all wery capital," replied Mr. Weller. "It's a dreadful trial to a father's feelin's, that 'ere, Sammy."

"Nonsense," said Sam. "I ain't a-goin' to get married, don't you fret yourself about that; I know you're a judge of these things. Order in your pipe, and I'll read you the letter. There!"

We cannot distinctly say whether it was the prospect of the pipe, or the consolatory reflection that a fatal disposition to get married ran in the family and couldn't be helped, which calmed Mr. Weller's feelings, and caused his grief to subside. We should be rather disposed to say that the result was attained by combining the two sources of consolation, for he repeated the second in a low tone, very frequently; ringing the bell meanwhile, to order in the first. He then divested himself of his upper coat; and lighting the pipe and placing himself in front of the fire with his back towards it, so that he could feel its full heat, and recline against the mantel-piece at the same time, turned towards Sam, and, with a countenance greatly mollified by the softening influence of tobacco, requested him to "fire away."

Sam dipped his pen into the ink to be ready for any corrections, and began with a very theatrical air:

“ ‘Lovely———.’ ”

“Stop,” said Mr. Weller, ringing the bell. “A double glass o’ the invariable, my dear.”

“Very well, sir,” replied the girl ; who with great quickness appeared, vanished, returned, and disappeared.

“They seem to know your ways here,” observed Sam.

“Yes,” replied his father, “I’ve been here before, in my time. Go on, Sammy.”

“ ‘Lovely creetur,’ ” repeated Sam.

“ ‘Tain’t in poetry, is it ? ” interposed his father.

“No, no,” replied Sam.

“Wery glad to hear it,” said Mr. Weller. “Poetry’s unnat’ral ; no man ever talked poetry ’cept a beadle on boxin’ day, or Warren’s blackin’, or Rowland’s oil, or some o’ them low fellows ; never you let yourself down to talk poetry, my boy. Begin agin, Sammy.”

Mr. Weller resumed his pipe with a critical solemnity, and Sam once more commenced, and read as follows :

“ ‘Lovely creetur i feel myself a dammed’——”

“That ain’t proper,” said Mr. Weller, taking his pipe from his mouth.

“No ; it ain’t ‘dammed’,” observed Sam, holding the letter up to the light, “it’s ‘shamed,’ there’s a blot there—‘I feel myself ashamed.’ ”

“Wery good,” said Mr. Weller. “Go on.”

“ ‘Feel myself ashamed, and completely cir——’ I forget what this here word is,” said Sam, scratching his head with the pen, in vain attempts to remember.

“Why don’t you look at it, then ? ” inquired Mr. Weller.

“So I *am* a-lookin’ at it,” replied Sam, “but there’s another blot. Here’s a ‘c,’ and a ‘i,’ and a ‘d.’ ”

“Circumwented, p’haps,” suggested Mr. Weller.

“No, it ain’t that,” said Sam, “circumscribed ; that’s it.”

“That ain’t as good a word as circumwented, Sammy,” said Mr. Weller, gravely.

“Think not ? ” said Sam.

"Nothin' like it," replied his father.

"But don't you think it means more?" inquired Sam.

"Vell, p'raps it is a more tenderer word," said Mr. Weller, after a few moments' reflection. "Go on, Sammy."

"Feel myself ashamed and completely circumscribed in a dressin' of you, for you *are* a nice gal and nothin' but it."

"That's a verry pretty sentiment," said the elder Mr. Weller, removing his pipe to make way for the remark.

"Yes, I think it is rayther good," observed Sam, highly flattered.

"Wot I like in that 'ere style of writin'," said the elder Mr. Weller, "is, that there ain't no callin' names in it,—no Wenuses, nor nothin' o' that kind. Wot's the good o' callin' a young 'ooman a Venus or a angel, Sammy?"

"Ah! what, indeed?" replied Sam.

"You might just as well call her a griffin, or a unicorn, or a king's arms at once, which is verry well known to be a collection o' fabulous animals," added Mr. Weller.

"Just as well," replied Sam.

"Drive on, Sammy," said Mr. Weller.

Sam complied with the request, and proceeded as follows: his father continuing to smoke, with a mixed expression of wisdom and complacency, which was particularly edifying.

"Afore I see you, I thought all women was alike."

"So they are," observed the elder Mr. Weller, parenthetically.

"But now," continued Sam, "now I find what a reg'lar soft-headed, ink-red'lous turnip I must ha' been: for there ain't nobody like you, though *I* like you better than nothin' at all. I thought it best to make that rayther strong," said Sam, looking up.

Mr. Weller nodded approvingly, and Sam resumed.

"So I take the privilidge of the day, Mary, my dear—as the gen'l'm'n in difficulties did, ven he valked out of a Sunday,—to tell you that the first and only time I see you, your like-

ness was took on my hart in much quicker time and brighter colors than ever a likeness was took by the profeel macheen (wich p'raps you may have heerd on, Mary my dear), altho it *does* finish a portrait and put the frame and glass on complete, with a hook at the end to hang it up by, and all in two minutes and a quarter.' "

"I am afeerd that werges on the poetical, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, dubiously.

"No it don't," replied Sam, reading on very quickly, to avoid contesting the point :

" 'Except of me, Mary, my dear, as your valentine, and think over what I've said.—My dear Mary I will now conclude.' That's all," said Sam.

"That's rather a sudden pull up, ain't it, Sammy?" inquired Mr. Weller.

"Not a bit on it," said Sam; she'll vish there wos more, and that's the great art o' letter writin'."

"Well," said Mr. Weller, "there's somethin' in that; and I wish your mother-in-law 'ud only conduct her conversation on the same gen-teel principle. Ain't you a-goin' to sign it?"

"That's the difficulty," said Sam; "I don't know what *to* sign it."

"Sign it Veller," said the oldest surviving proprietor of that name.

"Won't do," said Sam. "Never sign a valentine with your own name."

"Sign it 'Pickvick,' then," said Mr. Weller; "it's a very good name, and a easy one to spell."

"The very thing," said Sam. "I *could* end with a werse; what do you think?"

"I don't like it, Sam," rejoined Mr. Weller. "I never know'd a respectable coachman as wrote poetry, 'cept one, as made an affectin' copy o' worses the night afore he wos hung for highway robbery; and *he* wos only a Cambervell man, so even that's no rule."

But Sam was not to be dissuaded from the poetical idea that had occurred to him, so he signed the letter :

“Your love-sick
Pickwick.”

And having folded it in a very intricate manner, squeezed a down-hill direction in one corner : “To Mary, Housemaid, at Mr. Nupkins’s Mayor’s, Ipswich, Suffolk ;” and put it into his pocket, wafered, and ready for the General Post. This important business having been transacted, Mr. Weller the elder proceeded to open that on which he had summoned his son.

“**S**AMIVEL,” said Mr. Weller, accosting his son on the morning after the funeral, “I’ve found it, Sammy. I thought it was there.”

“Thought wot was were ?” inquired Sam.

“Your mother-in-law’s vill, Sammy,” replied Mr. Weller. “In wirtue o’ vich, them arrangements is to be made as I told you on, last night, respectin’ the funs.”

“Wot, didn’t she tell you were it was ?” inquired Sam.

“Not a bit on it, Sammy,” replied Mr. Weller. “We was a adjestin’ our little differences, and I was a-cheerin’ her spirits and bearin’ her up, so that I forgot to ask anythin’ about it. I don’t know as I should ha’ done it indeed, if I had remembered it,” added Mr. Weller, “for it’s a rum sort o’ thing, Sammy, to go a-hankerin’ arter anybody’s property, ven you’re assistin’ ’em in illness. It’s like helping an outside passenger up, ven he’s been pitched off a coach, and puttin’ your hand in his pocket, vile you ask him vith a sigh how he finds his-self, Sammy.”

“**I**T’S wonderful how the poor people patronize me,” said Mr. Bob Sawyer, reflectively. “They knock me up at all hours of the night ; they take medicine to an extent which I should have conceived impossible ; they put on blisters and leeches with a perseverance worthy of a better cause ; they

make additions to their families, in a manner which is quite awful. Six of those last-named little promissory notes, all due on the same day, Ben, and all intrusted to me !”

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

“**Y**OU were speaking about its being a girl,” said Miss Betsey. “I have no doubt it will be a girl. I have a presentiment that it must be a girl. Now child, from the moment of the birth of this girl—”

“Perhaps boy,” my mother took the liberty of putting in.

“I tell you I have a presentiment that it must be a girl,” returned Miss Betsey. “Don’t contradict. From the moment of this girl’s birth, child, I intend to be her friend. I intend to be her godmother, and I beg you’ll call her Betsey Trotwood Copperfield. There must be no mistakes in life with *this* Betsey Trotwood. There must be no trifling with *her* affections, poor dear. She must be well brought up, and well guarded from reposing any foolish confidences where they are not deserved. I must make that *my* care.”

THE mild Mr. Chillip could not possibly bear malice at such a time, if at any time. He sidled into the parlor as soon as he was at liberty, and said to my aunt in his meekest manner :

“Well, ma’am, I am happy to congratulate you.”

“What upon ?” said my aunt sharply.

Mr. Chillip was fluttered again, by the extreme severity of my aunt’s manner ; so he made her a little bow, and gave her a little smile, to mollify her.

“Mercy on the man, what’s he doing !” cried my aunt, impatiently. “Can’t he speak ?”

“Be calm, my dear ma’am,” said Mr. Chillip, in his softest accents. “There is no longer any occasion for uneasiness, ma’am. Be calm.”

It has since been considered almost a miracle that my aunt didn’t shake him, and shake what he had to say out of him. She only shook her own head at him, but in a way that made him quail.

“Well, ma’am,” resumed Mr. Chillip, as soon as he had courage, “I am happy to congratulate you. All is now over, ma’am, and well over.”

During the five minutes or so that Mr. Chillip devoted to the delivery of this oration, my aunt eyed him narrowly.

“How is she?” said my aunt, folding her arms, with her bonnet still tied on one of them.

“Well, ma’am, she will soon be quite comfortable, I hope,” returned Mr. Chillip. “Quite as comfortable as we can expect a young mother to be, under these melancholy domestic circumstances. There cannot be any objection to your seeing her presently, ma’am. It may do her good.”

“And *she*. How is *she*?” said my aunt sharply.

Mr. Chillip laid his head a little more on one side, and looked at my aunt like an amiable bird.

“The baby,” said my aunt. “How is she?”

“Ma’am,” returned Mr. Chillip, “I apprehended you had known. It’s a boy.”

My aunt said never a word, but took her bonnet by the strings, in the manner of a sling, aimed a blow at Mr. Chillip’s head with it, put it on bent, walked out, and never came back. She vanished like a discontented fairy; or like one of those supernatural beings whom it was popularly supposed I was entitled to see; and never came back any more.

No. I lay in my basket, and my mother lay in her bed; but Betsey Trotwood Copperfield was forever in the land of dreams and shadows, the tremendous region whence I had so lately travelled; and the light upon the window of our room shone out upon the earthly bourne of all such travellers, and

the mound above the ashes and the dust that once was he, without whom I had never been.

HERE is our pew in the church. What a high-backed pew! With a window near it, out of which our house can be seen, and *is* seen many times during the morning's service, by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it's not being robbed, or is not in flames. But though Peggotty's eye wanders, she is much offended if mine does, and frowns to me, as I stand upon the seat, that I am to look at the clergyman. But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of his wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to inquire—and what am I to do? It's a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, but *she* pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the aisle, and *he* makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep—I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church.

PEGGOTTY and I were sitting one night by the parlor fire, alone. I had been reading to Peggotty about crocodiles. I must have read very perspicuously, or the poor soul must have been deeply interested, for I remember she had a cloudy impression, after I had done, that they were a sort of vegetable. I was tired of reading, and dead sleepy; but having leave, as a high treat, to sit up until my mother came home from spending the evening at a neighbor's, I would rather have died upon my post (of course) than have gone to bed. I had reached that stage of sleepiness when Peggotty seemed to swell and grow immensely large. I propped my eyelids open with my two forefingers, and looked perseveringly at her as she sat at

work ; at the little bit of wax-candle she kept for her thread—how old it looked, being so wrinkled in all directions !—at the little house with a thatched roof, where the yard-measure lived ; at her work-box with a sliding lid, with a view of St. Paul's Cathedral (with a pink dome) painted on the top ; at the brass thimble on her finger ; at herself, whom I thought lovely. I felt so sleepy, that I knew if I lost sight of anything, for a moment, I was gone.

“Peggotty,” says I suddenly, “were you ever married ?”

“Lord, Master Davy,” replied Peggotty. “What's put marriage into your head ?”

She answered with such a start, that it quite awoke me. And then she stopped in her work, and looked at me, with her needle drawn out to its thread's length.

“But *were* you ever married, Peggotty ?” says I. “You are a very handsome woman, ain't you ?”

I thought her in a different style from my mother, certainly ; but of another school of beauty, I considered her a perfect example. There was a red velvet footstool in the best parlor, on which my mother had painted a nosegay. The groundwork of that stool and Peggotty's complexion appeared to me one and the same thing. The stool was smooth, and Peggotty was rough, but that made no difference.

“Me handsome, Davy !” said Peggotty. “Lawk, no, my dear ! But what put marriage in your head ?”

“I don't know ! You mustn't marry more than one person at a time, may you, Peggotty ?”

“Certainly not,” says Peggotty, with the promptest decision.

“But if you marry a person, and the person dies, why then you may marry another person, mayn't you, Peggotty ?”

“You *MAY*,” says Peggotty, “if you choose, my dear. That's a matter of opinion.”

“But what is your opinion, Peggotty ?” said I.

I asked her, and looked curiously at her, because she looked so curiously at me.

“My opinion is,” said Peggotty, taking her eyes from me,

after a little indecision and going on with her work, "that I never was married myself, Master Davy, and that I don't expect to be. That's all I know about the subject."

"You ain't cross, I suppose, Peggotty, are you?" said I, after sitting quiet for a minute.

I really thought she was, she had been so short with me ; but I was quite mistaken : for she laid aside her work (which was a stocking of her own), and opening her arms wide, took my curly head within them, and gave it a good squeeze. I know it was a good squeeze, because, being very plump, whenever she made any little exertion after she was dressed, some of the buttons on the back of her gown flew off. And I recollect two bursting to the opposite side of the parlor, while she was hugging me.

"Now let me hear some more about the Crorkindills," said Peggotty, who was not quite right in the name yet, "for I an't heard half enough."

I couldn't quite understand why Peggotty looked so queer, or why she was so ready to go back to the crocodiles. However, we returned to those monsters, with fresh wakefulness on my part, and we left their eggs in the sand for the sun to hatch ; and we ran away from them, and baffled them by constantly turning, which they were unable to do quickly, on account of their unwieldy make : and we went into the water after them, as natives, and put sharp pieces of timber down their throats ; and in short we ran the whole crocodile gauntlet. *I* did, at least ; but I had my doubts of Peggotty.

AT this we all fell a-crying together. I think I was the loudest of the party, but I am sure we were all sincere about it. I was quite heart-broken myself, and am afraid that in the first transports of wounded tenderness I called Peggotty a "Beast." That honest creature was in deep affliction, I remember, and must have become quite buttonless on the occasion : for a little volley of those explosives went off, when,

after having made it up with my mother, she kneeled down by the elbow-chair, and made it up with me.

We went to bed greatly dejected. My sobs kept waking me, for a long time; and when one very strong sob quite hoisted me up in bed, I found my mother sitting on the coverlet, and leaning over me. I fell asleep in her arms, after that, and slept soundly.

THEY left me, during this time, with a very nice man, with a very large head of red hair and a very small shiny hat upon it, who had got a cross-barred shirt or waistcoat on, with "Skylark" in capital letters across the chest. I thought it was his name; and that as he lived on board ship and hadn't a street-door to put his name on, he put it there instead; but when I called him Mr. Skylark, he said it meant the vessel.

I OFFERED him a cake as a mark of attention, which he ate at one gulp, exactly like an elephant, and which made no more impression on his big face than it would have done on an elephant's.

"Did *she* make 'em, now?" said Mr. Barkis, always leaning forward, in his slouching way, on the footboard of the cart with an arm on each knee.

"Peggotty, do you mean, sir?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Barkis. "Her."

"Yes. She makes all our pastry and does all our cooking."

"Do she though?" said Mr. Barkis.

He made up his mouth as if to whistle, but he didn't whistle. He sat looking at the horse's ears, as if he saw something new there; and sat so for a considerable time. By and by he said:

"No sweethearts, I b'lieve?"

"Sweetmeats did you say, Mr. Barkis?" For I thought he wanted something else to eat, and had pointedly alluded to that description of refreshment.

"Hearts," said Mr. Barkis. "Sweethearts : no person walks with her?"

"With Peggotty?"

"Ah!" he said. "Her."

"Oh, no. She never had a sweetheart."

"Didn't she, though?" said Mr. Barkis.

Again he made up his mouth to whistle, and again he didn't whistle, but sat looking at the horse's ears.

"So she makes," said Mr. Barkis, after a long interval of reflection, "all the apple parsties, and doos all the cooking, do she?"

I replied that such was the fact.

"Well. I'll tell you what," said Mr. Barkis. "P'raps you might be writin' to her?"

"I shall certainly write to her," I rejoined.

"Ah!" he said, slowly turning his eyes towards me. "Well! if you was writin' to her, p'raps you'd recollect to say that Barkis was willin' ; would you?"

"That Barkis was willing," I repeated innocently. "Is that all the message?"

"Ye—es," he said, considering. "Ye—es. Barkis is willin'."

"But you will be at Blunderstone again to-morrow, Mr. Barkis," I said, faltering a little at the idea of my being far away from it then, "and could give your own message so much better."

As he repudiated this suggestion, however, with a jerk of his head, and once more confirmed his previous request by saying, with profound gravity, "Barkis is willin'". That's the message," I readily undertook its transmission. While I was waiting for the coach in the hotel at Yarmouth that very afternoon, I procured a sheet of paper and an inkstand and wrote a note to Peggotty, which ran thus : "My dear Peggotty. I have come here safe. Barkis is willing. My love to mamma. Yours affectionately. P. S. He says he particularly wants you to know—*Barkis is willing.*"

“**N**OW, here you see young David Copperfield, and the question I put to you is, what shall I do with him?”

“What shall you do with him?” said Mr. Dick, feebly, scratching his head. “Oh! do with him?”

“Yes,” said my aunt, with a grave look, and her forefinger held up. “Come! I want some very sound advice.”

“Why, if I was you,” said Mr. Dick, considering, and looking vacantly at me, “I should—” The contemplation of me seemed to inspire him with a sudden idea, and he added briskly, “—I should wash him!”

“Janet,” said my aunt, turning round with a quiet triumph, which I did not then understand, “Mr. Dick sets us all right. Heat the bath!”

AFTER tea, we sat at the window—on the look-out, as I imagined, from my aunt’s sharp expression of face, for more invaders—until dusk, when Janet set candles and a backgammon-board on the table, and pulled down the blinds.

“Now, Mr. Dick,” said my aunt, with her grave look, and her forefinger up as before, “I am going to ask you another question. Look at this child.”

“David’s son?” said Mr. Dick, with an attentive, puzzled face.

“Exactly so,” returned my aunt. “What would you do with him, now?”

“Do with David’s son?” said Mr. Dick.

“Ay,” replied my aunt, “with David’s son.”

“Oh!” said Mr. Dick. “Yes. Do with—I should put him to bed.”

“**A**ND now, what have you got to say next?”

“Merely this, Miss Trotwood,” he returned. “I am here to take David back; to take him back unconditionally, to dispose of him as I think proper, and to deal with him as I think right. I am not here to make any promise, or give any pledge to anybody. You may possibly have some idea, Miss

Trotwood, of abetting him in his running away, and in his complaints to you. Your manner, which I must say does not seem intended to propitiate, induces me to think it possible. Now I must caution you that if you abet him once, you abet him for good and all ; if you step in between him and me, now, you must step in, Miss Trotwood, forever. I cannot trifle, or be trifled with. I am here for the first and last time, to take him away. Is he ready to go ? If he is not—and you tell me he is not ; on any pretence ; it is indifferent to me what—my doors are shut against him henceforth, and yours, I take it for granted, are open to him.”

To this address my aunt had listened with the closest attention, sitting perfectly upright, with her hands folded on one knee, and looking grimly on the speaker. When he had finished, she turned her eyes so as to command Miss Murdstone, without otherwise disturbing her attitude, and said :

“ Well, ma’am, have *you* got anything to remark ? ”

“ Indeed, Miss Trotwood,” said Miss Murdstone, “ all that I could say has been so well said by my brother, and all that I know to be the fact has been so plainly stated by him, that I have nothing to add except my thanks for your politeness. For your very great politeness, I am sure,” said Miss Murdstone ; with an irony which no more affected my aunt than it discomposed the cannon I had slept by at Chatham.

“ And what does the boy say ? ” said my aunt. “ Are you ready to go, David ? ”

I answered no, and entreated her not to let me go. I said that neither Mr. nor Miss Murdstone had ever liked me, or had ever been kind to me. That they had made my mamma, who always loved me dearly, unhappy about me, and that I knew it well, and that Peggotty knew it. I said that I had been more miserable than I thought anybody could believe who only knew how young I was. And I begged and prayed my aunt—I forget in what terms now, but I remember that they affected me very much then—to befriend and protect me for my father’s sake.

“Mr. Dick,” said my aunt; “what shall I do with this child?”

Mr. Dick considered, hesitated, brightened, and rejoined, “Have him measured for a suit of clothes directly.”

“Mr. Dick,” said my aunt triumphantly, “give me your hand, for your common sense is invaluable.”

HE received me with absolute enthusiasm. He was too rheumatic to be shaken hands with, but he begged me to shake the tassel on the top of his nightcap, which I did most cordially. When I sat down by the side of the bed, he said that it did him a world of good to feel as if he was driving me on the Blunderstone road again. As he lay in bed, face upward, and so covered, with that exception, that he seemed to be nothing but a face—like a conventional cherubim—he looked the queerest object I ever beheld.

“GENTLEMEN,” returned Mr. Micawber, “do with me as you will! I am a straw upon the surface of the deep, and am tossed in all directions by the elephants—I beg your pardon; I should have said the elements.”

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

THE resolution was, of course, carried with loud acclamations, every man holding up both hands in favor of it, as he would in his enthusiasm have held up both legs also, if he could have conveniently accomplished it.

THESE facts were no sooner thoroughly ascertained, than the lady gave several indications of fainting, but being forewarned that if she did, she must be carried on some gentle-

man's shoulders to the nearest public-house, she prudently thought better of it, and walked back with the rest.

AND so Miss Squeers made up her mind that she would take a personal observation of Nicholas the next day.

In pursuance of this design, the young lady watched the opportunity of her mother being engaged, and her father absent, and went accidentally into the school-room to get a pen mended: where seeing nobody but Nicholas presiding over the boys, she blushed very deeply, and exhibited great confusion.

"I beg your pardon," faltered Miss Squeers; "I thought my father was—or might be—dear me, how very awkward!"

"Mr. Squeers is out," said Nicholas, by no means overcome by the apparition, unexpected though it was.

"Do you know will he be long, sir?" asked Miss Squeers, with bashful hesitation.

"He said about an hour," replied Nicholas—politely of course, but without any indication of being stricken to the heart by Miss Squeers's charms.

"I never knew anything happen so cross," exclaimed the young lady. "Thank you! I am very sorry I intruded, I am sure. If I hadn't thought my father was here, I wouldn't upon any account have—it is very provoking—must look so very strange," murmured Miss Squeers, blushing once more, and glancing, from the pen in her hand, to Nicholas at his desk, and back again.

"If that is all you want," said Nicholas, pointing to the pen, and smiling, in spite of himself, at the affected embarrassment of the schoolmaster's daughter, "perhaps I can supply his place."

Miss Squeers glanced at the door, as if dubious of the propriety of advancing any nearer to an utter stranger; then round the school-room, as though in some measure reassured by the presence of forty boys; and finally sidled up to Nicholas and delivered the pen into his hand, with a most winning mixture of reserve and condescension.

"Shall it be a hard or a soft nib?" inquired Nicholas, smiling, to prevent himself from laughing outright.

"He *has* a beautiful smile," thought Miss Squeers.

"Which did you say?" asked Nicholas.

"Dear me, I was thinking of something else for the moment, I declare," replied Miss Squeers—"Oh! as soft as possible, if you please." With which words, Miss Squeers sighed. It might be, to give Nicholas to understand that her heart was soft, and that the pen was wanted to match.

Upon these instructions Nicholas made the pen; when he gave it to Miss Squeers, Miss Squeers dropped it; and when he stooped to pick it up, Miss Squeers stooped also, and they knocked their heads together; whereat five-and-twenty little boys laughed aloud: being positively for the first and only time that half year.

"Very awkward of me," said Nicholas, opening the door for the young lady's retreat.

"Not at all, sir," replied Miss Squeers; "it was my fault. It was all my foolish—a—a—good-morning!"

"Good-by," said Nicholas. "The next I make for you, I hope will be made less clumsily. Take care! You are biting the nib off now."

"Really," said Miss Squeers; "so embarrassing that I scarcely know what I—very sorry to give you so much trouble."

"Not the least trouble in the world," replied Nicholas, closing the school-room door.

"I never saw such legs in the whole course of my life!" said Miss Squeers, as she walked away.

In fact, Miss Squeers was in love with Nicholas Nickleby.

"**I**'M going to be married, and lead a new life. Ha, ha, ha! a new life, a new life! ha, ha, ha!"

It was a satisfactory thing to hear that the old gentleman was going to lead a new life, for it was pretty evident that his old one would not last him much longer.

“YOU don’t quite know what Mrs. Crummles is, yet.”

Nicholas ventured to insinuate that he thought he did.

“No, no, you don’t,” said Mr. Crummles; “you don’t indeed. *I* don’t, and that’s a fact. I don’t think her country will, till she is dead. Some new proof of talent bursts from that astonishing woman every year of her life. Look at her, mother of six children, three of ’em alive, and all upon the stage!”

“Extraordinary!” cried Nicholas.

“Ah! extraordinary indeed,” rejoined Mr. Crummles, taking a complacent pinch of snuff, and shaking his head gravely.

“I pledge you my professional word I didn’t even know she could dance, till her last benefit, and then she played Juliet, and Helen Macgregor, and did the skipping hornpipe between the pieces. The very first time I saw that admirable woman, Johnson,” said Mr. Crummles, drawing a little nearer, and speaking in the tone of confidential friendship, “she stood upon her head on the but-end of a spear, surrounded with blazing fireworks.”

“You astonish me!” said Nicholas.

“*She* astonished *me*!” returned Mr. Crummles, with a very serious countenance. “Such grace, coupled with such dignity! I adored her from that moment!”

“KATE, my dear,” said Mrs. Nickleby; “I don’t know how it is, but a fine warm summer day like this, with the birds singing in every direction, always puts me in mind of roast pig, with sage and onion sauce, and made gravy.”

“That’s a curious association of ideas, is it not, mamma?”

“Upon my word, my dear, I don’t know,” replied Mrs. Nickleby. “Roast pig; let me see. On the day five weeks after you were christened, we had a roast—no that couldn’t have been a pig, either, because I recollect there were a pair of them to carve, and your poor papa and I could never have thought of sitting down to two pigs—they must have been partridges. Roast pig! I hardly think we ever could have

had one, now I come to remember, for your papa could never bear the sight of them in the shops, and used to say that they always put him in mind of very little babies, only the pigs had much fairer complexions ; and he had a horror of little babies, too, because he couldn't very well afford any increase to his family, and had a natural dislike to the subject. It's very odd now, what can have put that in my head ! I recollect dining once at Mrs. Bevan's, in that broad street round the corner by the coachmaker's, where the tipsy man fell through the cellar-flap of an empty house nearly a week before the quarter-day, and wasn't found till the new tenant went in—and we had roast pig there. It must be that, I think, that reminds me of it, especially as there was a little bird in the room that would keep on singing all the time of dinner—at least not a little bird, for it was a parrot, and he didn't sing exactly, for he talked and swore dreadfully ; but I think it must be that. Indeed I am sure it must. Shouldn't you say so, my dear ?”

“**S**HE is come !” said the old gentleman, laying his hand upon his heart. “Cormoran and Blunderbore ! She is come ! All the wealth I have is hers if she will take me for her slave. Where are grace, beauty, and blandishments, like those ? In the Empress of Madagascar ? No. In the Queen of Diamonds ? No. In Mrs. Rowland, who every morning bathes in Kalydor for nothing ? No. Melt all these down into one, with the three graces, the nine Muses, and fourteen biscuit-makers' daughters from Oxford Street, and make a woman half as lovely. Pho ! I defy you.”

FROM THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

IT was a maxim with Mr. Brass that the habit of paying compliments kept a man's tongue oiled without any expense ; and, as that useful member ought never to grow rusty or creak

in turning on its hinges in the case of a practitioner of the law, in whom it should be always glib and easy, he lost few opportunities of improving himself by the utterance of handsome speeches and eulogistic expressions.

“**W**E have been distracted with fears that you were dead, sir,” said Dick, gently sliding to the ground, “and the short and the long of it is, that we cannot allow single gentlemen to come into this establishment and sleep like double gentlemen without paying extra for it?”

“Indeed!” cried the lodger.

“Yes, sir, indeed,” returned Dick, yielding to his destiny and saying whatever came uppermost; “an equal quantity of slumber was never got out of one bed and bedstead, and if you’re going to sleep in that way, you must pay for a double-bedded room.”

“**H**ONESTY is the best policy.—I always find it so myself. I lost forty-seven pound ten by being honest this morning. But it’s all gain, it’s gain!”

Mr. Brass slyly tickles his nose with his pen, and looks at Kit with the water standing in his eyes. Kit thinks that if ever there was a good man who belied his appearance, that man is Sampson Brass.

“A man,” says Sampson, “who loses forty-seven pounds ten in one morning by his honesty, is a man to be envied. If it had been eighty pound, the luxuriousness of feeling would have been increased. Every pound lost would have been a hundredweight of happiness gained. The still small voice, Christopher,” cries Brass, smiling, and tapping himself on the bosom, “is a-singing comic songs within me, and all is happiness and joy!”

FROM LITTLE DORRIT.

“**A**S to being a reference,” said Pancks, “you know in a general way what being a reference means. It’s all your eye, that is! Look at your tenants down the Yard here. They’d all be references for one another, if you’d let ’em. What would be the good of letting ’em? It’s no satisfaction to be done by two men instead of one. One’s enough. A person who can’t pay, gets another person who can’t pay, to guarantee that he can pay. Like a person with two wooden legs, getting another person with two wooden legs, to guarantee that he has got two natural legs. It don’t make either of them able to do a walking-match. And four wooden legs are more troublesome to you than two, when you don’t want any.” Mr. Pancks concluded by blowing off that steam of his.

“**A**MY,” said Mr. Dorrit, “you have just now been the subject of some conversation between myself and Mrs. General. We agree that you scarcely seem at home here. Ha—how is this?”

A pause.

“I think, father, I require a little time.”

“Papa is a preferable mode of address,” observed Mrs. General. “Father is rather vulgar, my dear. The word Papa, besides, gives a pretty form to the lips. Papa, potatoes, poultry, prunes, and prism, are all very good words for the lips: especially prunes and prism. You will find it serviceable, in the formation of a demeanor, if you sometimes say to yourself in company—on entering a room, for instance—Papa, potatoes, poultry, prunes and prism, prunes and prism.”

“Pray, my child,” said Mr. Dorrit, “attend to the—hum—precepts of Mrs. General.”

Poor little Dorrit, with a rather forlorn glance at that eminent varnisher, promised to try.

THIS conjunction of circumstances led to his immediately afterwards presenting himself before the young ladies in a posture, which in ancient times would not have been considered one of favorable augury for his suit; since the gondoliers of the young ladies, having been put to some inconvenience by the chase, so neatly brought their own boat in the gentlest collision with the bark of Mr. Sparkler, as to tip that gentleman over like a large species of ninepin, and cause him to exhibit the soles of his shoes to the object of his dearest wishes: while the nobler portions of his anatomy struggled at the bottom of his boat, in the arms of one of his men.

“MR. CLENNAM, don't you take no notice of my son (if you'll be so good) in case you find him cut up any ways difficult. My son has a 'art, and my son's 'art is in the right place. Me and his mother knows where to find it, and we find it sitiwated correct.”

MR. PANCKS led an unhappy and restless life; constantly carrying his figures about with him in his hat, and not only going over them himself on every possible occasion, but entreating every human being he could lay hold of to go over them with him, and observe what a clear case it was. Down in Bleeding Heart Yard, there was scarcely an inhabitant of any note to whom Mr. Pancks had not imparted his demonstration, and, as figures are catching, a kind of ciphering measles broke out in that locality, under the influence of which the whole Yard was light-headed.

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

IT would be no description of Mr. Pecksniff's gentleness of manner to adopt the common parlance, and say, that he looked at this moment as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth.

He rather looked as if any quantity of butter might have been made out of him, by churning the milk of human kindness, as it spouted upwards from his heart.

“**T**HEN I will not,” said Mr. Pecksniff. “You are quite right, my dear madam, and I appreciate and thank you for your discriminating objection—our respected relative, to dispose him to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the—”

“Go on, pa!” cried Mercy.

“Why, the truth is, my dear,” said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling upon his assembled kindred, “that I am at a loss for a word. The name of those fabulous animals (pagan, I regret to say) who used to sing in the water, has quite escaped me.”

Mr. George Chuzzlewit suggested “Swans.”

“No,” said Mr. Pecksniff. “Not swans. Very like swans, too. Thank you.”

The nephew with the outline of a countenance, speaking for the first and last time on that occasion, propounded “Oysters.”

“No,” said Mr. Pecksniff, with his own peculiar urbanity, “nor oysters. But by no means unlike oysters; a very excellent idea; thank you, my dear sir, very much. Wait! Sirens. Dear me! sirens, of course. I think, I say, that means might be devised of disposing our respected relative to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the siren-like delusions of art.

“**I**F Mr. George Chuzzlewit has anything to say to *me*,” interposed the strong-minded woman, sternly, “I beg him to speak out like a man; and not to look at me and my daughters as if he could eat us.”

“As to looking, I have heard it said, Mrs. Ned,” returned Mr. George, angrily, “that a cat is free to contemplate a monarch; and therefore I hope I have some right, having been born a member of this family, to look at a person who only

came into it by marriage. As to eating, I beg to say, whatever bitterness your jealousies and disappointed expectations may suggest to you, that I am not a cannibal, ma'am."

"I don't know that!" cried the strong-minded woman.

"At all events, if I was a cannibal," said Mr. George Chuzzlewit, greatly stimulated by this retort, "I think it would occur to me that a lady who had outlived three husbands, and suffered so very little from their loss, must be uncommonly tough."

"**Y**OU leave the recompense to me?" said the old man, after a minute's silence.

"Oh! do not speak of recompense?" cried Pecksniff.

"I say," repeated Martin, with a glimmer of his old obstinacy, "you leave the recompense to me. Do you?"

"Since you desire it, my good sir."

"I always desire it," said the old man. "You know I always desire it. I wish to pay as I go, even when I buy of you. Not that I do not leave a balance to be settled one day, Pecksniff."

The architect was too much overcome to speak. He tried to drop a tear upon his patron's hand, but couldn't find one in his dry distillery.

"**W**HAT boat did you want?" asked Ruth.

"The Ankworks package," Mrs. Gamp replied. "I will not deceive you, my sweet. Why should I?"

"That is the Antwerp packet in the middle," said Ruth.

"And I wish it was in Jonadge's belly, I do," cried Mrs. Gamp; appearing to confound the prophet with the whale in this miraculous aspiration.

"**M**ARK!" said Tom Pinch, energetically: "if you don't sit down this minute, I'll swear at you!"

"Well, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, "sooner than you should

do that, I'll com-ply. It's a considerable invasion of a man's jollity to be made so partickler welcome, but a Werb is a word as signifies to be, to do, or to suffer (which is all the grammar, and enough too, as ever I was taught) ; and if there's a Werb alive, I'm it. For I'm always a bein', sometimes a doin', and continually a sufferin'."

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

"**D**ID you ever hear tell of mermaids, sir?" said Mr. Willet.

"Certainly I have," replied the clerk.

"Very good," said Mr. Willet. "According to the constitution of mermaids, so much of a mermaid as is not a woman must be a fish. According to the constitution of young princes, so much of a young prince (if anything) as is not actually an angel, must be godly and righteous. Therefore if it's becoming and godly and righteous in the young princes (as it is at their ages) that they should be boys, they are and must be boys, and cannot by possibility be anything else."

THE proceedings of such a day occasioned various fluctuations in the human thermometer, and especially in instruments so sensitively and delicately constructed as Mrs. Varden. Thus, at dinner Mrs. V. stood at summer heat ; genial, smiling, and delightful. After dinner, in the sunshine of the wine, she went up at least half a dozen degrees, and was perfectly enchanting. As its effect subsided, she fell rapidly, went to sleep for an hour or so at temperate, and woke at something below freezing. Now she was at summer heat again, in the shade ; and when tea was over, and old John, producing a bottle of cordial from one of the oaken cases, insisted on her sipping two glasses thereof in slow succession, she stood

steadily at ninety for one hour and a quarter. Profiting by experience, the locksmith took advantage of this genial weather to smoke his pipe in the porch, and in consequence of this prudent management, he was fully prepared, when the glass went down again, to start homewards directly.

“**I**F time were money,” he said, handling his snuff-box, “I would compound with my creditors, and give them—let me see—how much a day? There’s my nap after dinner—an hour—they’re extremely welcome to that, and to make the most of it. In the morning, between my breakfast and the paper, I could spare them another hour; in the evening, before dinner, say another. Three hours a day. They might pay themselves in calls, with interest, in twelve months. I think I shall propose it to them.

AND yet here was this same Dolly Varden, so whimsical and hard to please that she was Dolly Varden still, all smiles and dimples, and pleasant looks, and caring no more for the fifty or sixty young fellows who at that very moment were breaking their hearts to marry her, than if so many oysters had been crossed in love and opened afterwards.

FROM OUR MUTUAL FRIEND.

“**D**ON’T talk of children. I can’t bear children. I know their tricks and their manners.” She said this with an angry little shake of her right fist close before her eyes.

Perhaps it scarcely required the teacher-habit to perceive that the doll’s dressmaker was inclined to be bitter on the difference between herself and other children. But both master and pupil understood it so.

“Always running about and screeching, always playing and fighting, always skip-skip-skiping on the pavement and chalking it for their games! Oh! *I* know their tricks and their manners!” Shaking the little fist as before. “And that’s not all. Ever so often calling names in through a person’s key-hole, and imitating a person’s back and legs. Oh! *I* know their tricks and their manners. And I’ll tell you what I’d do, to punish ’em. There’s doors under the church in the Square—black doors, leading into black vaults. Well! I’d open one of those doors, and I’d cram ’em all in, and then I’d lock the door and through the key-hole I’d blow in pepper.”

“What would be the good of blowing in pepper?” asked Charley Hexam.

“To set ’em sneezing,” said the person of the house, “and make their eyes water. And when they were all sneezing and inflamed, I’d mock ’em through the key-hole. Just as they, with their tricks and their manners, mock a person through a person’s key-hole!”

An uncommonly emphatic shake of her little fist close before her eyes, seemed to ease the mind of the person of the house; for she added with recovered composure, “No, no, no. No children for me. Give me grown-ups.”

MR. and Mrs. Lammle’s house in Sackville Street, Piccadilly, was but a temporary residence. It had done well enough, they informed their friends, for Mr. Lammle when a bachelor, but it would not do now. So, they were always looking at palatial residences in the best situations, and always very nearly taking or buying one, but never quite concluding the bargain. Hereby they made for themselves a shining little reputation apart. People said, on seeing a vacant palatial residence, “the very thing for the Lammles!” and wrote to the Lammles about it, and the Lammles always went to look at it, but unfortunately it never exactly answered. In short, they suffered so many disappointments, that they began to think it

would be necessary to build a palatial residence. And hereby they made another shining reputation ; many persons of their acquaintance becoming by anticipation dissatisfied with their own houses, and envious of the non-existent Lammle structure.

FLEDGEBY deserved Mr. Alfred Lammle's eulogium. He was the meanest cur existing, with a single pair of legs. And instinct (a word we all clearly understand) going largely on four legs, and reason always on two, meanness on four legs never attains the perfection of meanness on two.

The father of this young gentleman had been a money-lender, who had transacted professional business with the mother of this young gentleman, when he, the latter, was waiting in the vast, dark antechambers of the present world to be born. The lady, a widow, being unable to pay the money-lender, married him ; and in due course, Fledgeby was summoned out of the vast, dark antechambers to come and be presented to the Registrar-General. Rather a curious speculation how Fledgeby would otherwise have disposed of his leisure until Doomsday.

Fledgeby's mother offended her family by marrying Fledgeby's father. It is one of the easiest achievements in life to offend your family when your family want to get rid of you. Fledgeby's mother's family had been very much offended with her for being poor, and broke with her for becoming comparatively rich. Fledgeby's mother's family was the Snigsworth family. She had even the high honor to be cousin to Lord Snigsworth—so many times removed that the noble Earl would have had no compunction in removing her one time more and dropping her clean outside the cousinly pale ; but cousin for all that.

“**W**ELL, ma,” returned Lavvy, “since you will force it out of me, I must respectfully take leave to say that your family are no doubt under the greatest obligations to you

for having an annual toothache on your wedding-day, and that it's very disinterested in you, and an immense blessing to them. Still, on the whole, it is possible to be too boastful even of that boon."

"You incarnation of sauciness," said Mrs. Wilfer, "do you speak like that to me? On this day, of all days in the year? Pray do you know what would have become of you, if I had not bestowed my hand upon R. W., your father, on this day?"

"No, ma," replied Lavvy, "I really do not; and, with the greatest respect for your abilities and information, I very much doubt if you do either."

"**B**UT what," said Bella, as she watched the carving of the fowls, "makes them pink inside, I wonder, pa! Is it the breed?"

"No, I don't think it's the breed, my dear," returned pa, "I rather think it is because they are not done."

"**H**OW a mother can look at her baby, and know that she lives beyond her husband's means, I cannot imagine."

Eugene suggests that Mrs. Lammle, not being a mother, had no baby to look at.

"True," says Mrs. Veneering, "but the principle is the same."

PECULIAR INCIDENTS.



CHAPTER II.

FROM GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

“**I**’VE been done everything to, pretty well—except hanged. I’ve been locked up as much as a silver tea-kettle. I’ve been carted here and carted there, and put out of this town and put out of that town, and stuck in the stocks, and whipped and worried and drove. I’ve no more notion where I was born, than you have—if so much. I first become aware of myself, down in Essex, a-thieving turnips for my living. Summun had run away from me—a man—a tinker—and he’d took the fire with him, and left me wery cold.

“I know’d my name to be Magwitch, christen’d Abel. How did I know it? Much as I know’d the bird’s names in the hedges to be chaffinch, sparrer, thrush. I might have thought it was all lies together, only as the birds’ names come out true, I supposed mine did.

“So fur as I could find, there warn’t a soul that see young Abel Magwitch, with as little on him as in him, but wot caught fright at him, and either drove him off, or took him up. I was took up, took up, took up, to that extent that I reg’larly grow’d up took up.

“This is the way it was, that when I was a ragged little creetur as much to be pitied as ever I see (not that I looked in the glass, for there warn’t many insides of furnished houses

known to me), I got the name of being hardened. 'This is a terrible hardened one,' they says to prison visitors, picking me out. 'May be said to live in jails, this boy.' Then they looked at me, and I looked at them, and they measured my head, some on 'em—they had better a measured my stomach—and others on 'em give me tracts what I couldn't read, and made me speeches what I couldn't understand. They always went on agen me about the Devil. But what the devil was I to do? I must put something into my stomach, mustn't I?

AS Wemmick and Miss Skiffins sat side by side, and as I sat in a shadowy corner, I observed a slow and gradual elongation of Mr. Wemmick's mouth, powerfully suggestive of his slowly and gradually stealing his arm round Miss Skiffins's waist. In course of time I saw his hand appear on the other side of Miss Skiffins; but at that moment Miss Skiffins neatly stopped him with the green glove, unwound his arm again as if it were an article of dress, and with the greatest deliberation laid it on the table before her. Miss Skiffins's composure while she did this was one of the most remarkable sights I have ever seen, and if I could have thought the act consistent with abstraction of mind, I should have deemed that Miss Skiffins performed it mechanically.

By and by I noticed Wemmick's arm beginning to disappear again, and gradually fading out of view. Shortly afterward, his mouth began to widen again. After an interval of suspense on my part that was quite enthralling and almost painful, I saw his hand appear on the other side of Miss Skiffins. Instantly, Miss Skiffins stopped it with the neatness of a placid boxer, took off that girdle or cestus as before, and laid it on the table. Taking the table to represent the path of virtue, I am justified in stating that during the whole time of the Aged's reading, Wemmick's arm was straying from the path of virtue and being recalled to it by Miss Skiffins.

“HALLOA!” said Wemmick. “Here’s Miss Skiffins! Let’s have a wedding.”

That discreet damsel was attired as usual, except that she was now engaged in substituting for her green kid gloves a pair of white. The Aged was likewise occupied in preparing a similar sacrifice for the altar of Hymen. The old gentleman, however, experienced so much difficulty in getting his gloves on, that Wemmick found it necessary to put him with his back against a pillar, and then to get behind the pillar himself and pull away at them, while I for my part held the old gentleman round the waist, that he might present an equal and safe resistance. By dint of this ingenious scheme, his gloves were got on to perfection.

The clerk and clergyman then appearing, we were ranged in order at those fatal rails. True to his notion of seeming to do it all without preparation, I heard Wemmick say to himself as he took something out of his waistcoat-pocket before the service began, “Halloa! Here’s a ring!”

I acted in the capacity of backer, or best-man, to the bridegroom; while a little limp pew-opener in a soft bonnet like a baby’s, made a feint of being the bosom friend of Miss Skiffins. The responsibility of giving the lady away devolved upon the Aged, which led to the clergyman’s being unintentionally scandalized, and it happened thus. When he said, “Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?” the old gentleman, not in the least knowing what point of the ceremony we had arrived at, stood most amiably beaming at the ten commandments. Upon which, the clergyman said again, “WHO giveth this woman to be married to this man?” The old gentleman being still in a state of most estimable unconsciousness, the bridegroom called out in his accustomed voice, “Now Aged P. you know; who giveth?” To which the Aged replied with great briskness, before saying that *he* gave, “All right, John, all right, my boy!” And the clergyman came to so gloomy a pause upon it, that I had doubts for the moment whether we should get completely married that day.

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

“**Y**OUNG boys have been smothered in chimneys before now,” said another gentleman.

“That’s acause they damped the straw afore they lit it in the chimbley, to make ’em come down again,” said Gamfield; “that’s all smoke, and no blaze: vereas smoke ain’t o’ no use at all in makin’ a boy come down; for it only sinds him to sleep, and that’s wot he likes. Boys is wery obstinit, and wery lazy, gen’lm’n, and there’s nothink like a good hot blaze to make ’em come down vith a run; it’s humane, too, gen’lm’n, acause, even if they’ve stuck in the chimbley, roastin’ their feet makes ’em struggle to hextricate theirselves.”

IN pursuance of this determination, little Oliver, to his excessive astonishment, was released from bondage, and ordered to put himself into a clean shirt. He had hardly achieved this very unusual gymnastic performance, when Mr. Bumble brought him, with his own hands, a basin of gruel, and the holiday allowance of two ounces and a quarter of bread. At this tremendous sight, Oliver began to cry very piteously; thinking, not unnaturally, that the board must have determined to kill him for some useful purpose, or they never would have begun to fatten him up in that way.

“Don’t make your eyes red, Oliver, but eat your food, and be thankful,” said Mr. Bumble, in a tone of impressive pomposity. “You’re a-going to be made a ’prentice of, Oliver.”

“A ’prentice, sir!” said the child, trembling.

“Yes, Oliver,” said Mr. Bumble. “The kind and blessed gentlemen which is so many parents to you, Oliver, when you have none of your own, are a-going to ’prentice you, and to set you up in life, and make a man of you, although the expense to the parish is three pound ten!—three pound ten, Oliver!—seventy shillin’s—one hundred and forty sixpences!—and all for a naughty orphan which nobody can’t love.”

As Mr. Bumble paused to take breath, after delivering this address in an awful voice, the tears rolled down the poor child's face, and he sobbed bitterly.

"Come," said Mr. Bumble, somewhat less pompously, for it was gratifying to his feelings to observe the effect his eloquence had produced: "come, Oliver! Wipe your eyes with the cuffs of your jacket, and don't cry into your gruel; that's a very foolish action, Oliver." It certainly was, for there was quite enough water in it already.

"**Y**OU did well yesterday, my dear," said the Jew. "Beautiful! Six shillings and ninepence-halfpenny on the very first day! The kinchin lay will be a fortune to you."

"Don't you forget to add three pint-pots and a milk-can," said Mr. Bolter.

"No, no, my dear," replied the Jew. "The pint-pots were great strokes of genius: but the milk-can was a perfect masterpiece."

"Pretty well, I think, for a beginner," remarked Mr. Bolter, complacently. "The pots I took off airy railings, and the milk-can was standing by itself outside a public-house. I thought it might get rusty with the rain, or catch cold, yer know. Eh? Ha! ha! ha!"

"**L**OOK here! do you see this! Isn't it a most wonderful and extraordinary thing that I can't call at a man's house but I find a piece of this poor surgeon's friend on the staircase? I've been lamed with orange-peel once, and I know orange-peel will be my death at last. It will, sir; orange-peel will be my death, or I'll be content to eat my own head, sir!"

This was the handsome offer with which Mr. Grimwig backed and confirmed nearly every assertion he made; and it was the more singular in his case, because, even admitting, for the sake of argument, the possibility of scientific improvements being

ever brought to that pass which will enable a gentleman to eat his own head, in the event of his being so disposed ; Mr. Grimwig's head was such a particularly large one, that the most sanguine man alive could hardly entertain a hope of being able to get through it at a sitting—to put entirely out of the question a very thick coating of powder.

“I'll eat my head, sir,” repeated Mr. Grimwig, striking his stick upon the ground. “Hallo ; what's that !” looking at Oliver, and retreating a pace or two.

“This is young Oliver Twist, whom we were speaking about,” said Mr. Brownlow.

Oliver bowed.

“You don't mean to say that's the boy who had the fever, I hope ?” said Mr. Grimwig, recoiling a little more. “Wait a minute ! Don't speak ! Stop—” continued Mr. Grimwig abruptly, losing all dread of the fever in his triumph at the discovery : “that's the boy who had the orange ! If that's not the boy, sir, who had the orange, and threw this bit of peel upon the staircase, I'll eat my head, and his, too.”

FROM OUR MUTUAL FRIEND.

MR. WEGG, not to name myself as a workman without an equal, I've gone on improving myself in my knowledge of Anatomy, till both by sight and by name I'm perfect. Mr. Wegg, if you were brought here loose in a bag to be articulated, I'd name your smallest bones blindfold equally with your largest, as fast as I could pick 'em out, and I'd sort 'em all, and sort your wertebrae, in a manner that would equally surprise and charm you.”

“Well,” remarks Silas (though not quite so readily as last time), “*that* ain't a state of things to be low about. Not for *you* to be low about, leastways.”

“Mr. Wegg, I know it ain’t; Mr. Wegg, I know it ain’t. But it’s the heart that lowers me, it is the heart! Be so good as to take and read that card out loud.”

Silas receives one from his hand, which Venus takes from a wonderful litter in the drawer, and putting on his spectacles, reads :

“ ‘Mr. Venus,’ ”

“Yes. Go on.”

“ ‘Preserver of Animals and Birds,’ ”

“Yes. Go on.”

“ ‘Articulator of human bones.’ ”

“That’s it,” with a groan. “That’s it! Mr. Wegg, I’m thirty-two, and a bachelor. Mr. Wegg, I love her. Mr. Wegg, she is worthy of being loved by a Potentate!” Here Silas is rather alarmed by Mr. Venus’s springing to his feet in the hurry of his spirits, and haggardly confronting him with his hand on his coat-collar; but Mr. Venus, begging pardon, sits down again, saying, with the calmness of despair,

“She objects to the business.”

“Does she know the profits of it?”

“She knows the profits of it, but she don’t appreciate the art of it, and she objects to it. ‘I do not wish,’ she writes in her own handwriting, ‘to regard myself, nor yet to be regarded, in that bony light.’ ”

“**M**RS. BOFFIN wishes to adopt a little boy, my dear.” Mrs. Milvey looking rather alarmed, her husband added :

“An orphan, my dear.”

“Oh!” said Mrs. Milvey, reassured for her own little boys.

“And I was thinking, Margaretta, that perhaps old Mrs. Goody’s grandchild might answer the purpose.”

“Oh, my *dear* Frank! I *don’t* think that would do.”

“No.”

“Oh *no*!”

The smiling Mrs. Boffin, feeling it incumbent on her to take part in the conversation, and being charmed with the emphatic little wife and her ready interest, here offered her acknowledgments and inquired what there was against him ?

“ I *don't* think,” said Mrs. Milvey, glancing at the Reverend Frank, “—and I believe my husband will agree with me when he considers it again—that you could possibly keep that orphan clean from snuff. Because his grandmother takes so *many* ounces, and drops it over him.”

“ But he would not be living with his grandmother then, Margaretta,” said Mr. Milvey.

“ No, Frank, but it would be impossible to keep her from Mrs. Boffin's house ; and the *more* there was to eat and drink there, the oftener she would go. And she *is* an inconvenient woman. I *hope* it's not uncharitable to remember that last Christmas eve she drank eleven cups of tea, and grumbled all the time. And she is *not* a grateful woman, Frank. You recollect her addressing a crowd outside this house, about her wrongs, when, one night after she had gone to bed, she brought back the petticoat of new flannel that had been given her, because it was too short.”

“ That's true,” said Mr. Milvey. “ I don't think that would do. Would little Harrison—”

“ Oh, *Frank !*” remonstrated his emphatic wife.

“ He has no grandmother, my dear.”

“ No, but I *don't* think Mrs. Boffin would like an orphan who squints so *much*.”

“ That's true again,” said Mr. Milvey, becoming haggard with perplexity. “ If a little girl would do—”

“ But, my *dear* Frank, Mrs. Boffin wants a boy.”

“ That's true again,” said Mr. Milvey. “ Tom Bocker is a nice boy” (thoughtfully).

“ But I *doubt*, Frank,” Mrs. Milvey hinted, after a little hesitation, “ if Mrs. Boffin wants an orphan *quite* nineteen, who drives a cart and waters the roads.”

Mr. Milvey referred the point to Mrs. Boffin in a look ; on

that smiling lady's shaking her black-velvet bonnet and bows, he remarked, in lower spirits, "that's true again."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Boffin, concerned at giving so much trouble, "that if I had known you would have taken so much pains, sir—and you too, ma'am—I don't think I would have come."

"MY respected father, let me shorten the dutiful tautology by substituting in future M. R. F., which sounds military, and rather like the Duke of Wellington."

"What an absurd fellow you are, Eugene!"

"Not at all, I assure you. M. R. F., having always in the clearest manner provided (as he calls it) for his children by pre-arranging from the hour of the birth of each, and sometimes from an earlier period, what the devoted little victim's calling and course in life should be, M. R. F. pre-arranged for myself that I was to be the barrister I am (with the slight addition of an enormous practice, which has not accrued), and also the married man I am not."

"The first you have often told me."

"The first I have often told you. Considering myself sufficiently incongruous on my legal eminence, I have until now suppressed my domestic destiny. You know M. R. F., but not as well as I do. If you knew him as well as I do, he would amuse you."

"Filially spoken, Eugene!"

"Perfectly so, believe me; and with every sentiment of affectionate deference towards M. R. F. But if he amuses me, I can't help it. When my eldest brother was born, of course the rest of us knew (I mean the rest of us would have known, if we had been in existence) that he was heir to the Family Embarrassments—we call it before company the Family Estate. But when my second brother was going to be born by and by, 'this,' says M. R. F., 'is a little pillar of the church.' *Was* born, and became a pillar of the church: a very shaky

one. My third brother appeared, considerably in advance of his engagement to my mother ; but M. R. F., not at all put out by surprise, instantly declared him a Circumnavigator. Was pitchforked into the Navy, but has not circumnavigated. I announced myself, and was disposed of with the highly satisfactory results embodied before you. When my younger brother was half an hour old, it was settled by M. R. F. that he should have a mechanical genius. And so on. Therefore I say that M. R. F. amuses me."

MISS LAVINIA was extremely affable to Mr. Sampson on this special occasion, and took the opportunity of informing her sister why.

"It was not worth troubling you about, Bella, when you were in a sphere so far removed from your family as to make it a matter in which you could be expected to take very little interest," said Lavinia, with a toss of her chin : "but George Sampson is paying his addresses to me."

Bella was glad to hear it. Mr. Sampson became thoughtfully red, and felt called upon to encircle Miss Lavinia's waist with his arm ; but, encountering a large pin in the young lady's belt, sacrificed a finger, uttered a sharp exclamation, and attracted the lightning of Mrs. Wilfer's glare.

THEREFORE, the police sent for something to cover it, and it was covered and borne through the streets, the people falling away. After it went the dolls' dressmaker, hiding her face in the Jewish skirts, and clinging to them with one hand, while with the other she plied her stick. It was carried home, and, by reason that the staircase was very narrow, it was put down in the parlor—the little working-bench being set aside to make room for it—and there, in the midst of the dolls with no speculation in their eyes, lay Mr. Dolls with no speculation in his.

“**I** WISH to goodness, ma,” said Lavvy, throwing herself back among the cushions, with her arms crossed, “that you’d loll a little.”

“How!” repeated Mrs. Wilfer. “Loll!”

“Yes, ma.”

“I hope,” said the impressive lady, “I am incapable of it.”

“I am sure you look so, ma. But why one should go out to dine with one’s own daughter or sister, as if one’s underpetticoat was a backboard, I do *not* understand.”

“Neither do I understand,” retorted Mrs. Wilfer, with deep scorn, “how a young lady can mention the garment in the name of which you have indulged. I blush for you.”

“Thank you, ma,” said Lavvy, yawning, “but I can do it for myself, I am obliged to you, when there’s any occasion.”

Here Mr. Sampson, with the view of establishing harmony, which he never under any circumstances succeeded in doing, said, with an agreeable smile: “After all, you know, ma’am, we know it’s there.” And immediately felt that he had committed himself.

“We know it’s there!” said Mrs. Wilfer, glaring.

“Really, George,” remonstrated Miss Lavinia, “I must say that I don’t understand your allusions, and that I think you might be more delicate and less personal.”

“Go it!” cried Mr. Sampson, becoming, on the shortest notice, a prey to despair. “Oh yes! Go it, Miss Lavinia Wilfer!”

“What you may mean, George Sampson, by your omnibus-driving expressions, I cannot pretend to imagine. Neither,” said Miss Lavinia, “Mr. George Sampson, do I wish to imagine. It is enough for me to know in my own heart that I am not going to—” having imprudently got into a sentence without providing a way out of it, Miss Lavinia was constrained to close with “going to go it.” A weak conclusion which, however, derived some appearance of strength from disdain.

“Oh yes!” cried Mr. Sampson, with bitterness. “Thus it ever is. I never—”

"If you mean to say," Miss Lavvy cut him short, "that you never brought up a young gazelle, you may save yourself the trouble, because nobody in this carriage supposes that you ever did. We know you better."

"COME in, sir," said Miss Wren, who was working at her bench. "And who may you be?"

Mr. Sloppy introduced himself by name and buttons.

"Oh, indeed!" cried Jenny. "Ah! I have been looking forward to knowing you. I heard of your distinguishing yourself."

"Did you, miss?" grinned Sloppy. "I am sure I am glad to hear it, but I don't know how."

"Pitching somebody into a mud-cart," said Miss Wren.

"Oh! That way!" cried Sloppy. "Yes, miss." And threw back his head and laughed.

"Bless us!" exclaimed Miss Wren with a start. "Don't open your mouth as wide as that, young man, or it'll catch so, and not shut again some day."

Mr. Sloppy opened it, if possible, wider, and kept it open until his laugh was out.

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

"HOW old is that horse, my friend?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his nose with the shilling he had reserved for the fare.

"Forty-two," replied the driver, eying him askant.

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, laying his hand upon his note-book. The driver reiterated his former statement. Mr. Pickwick looked very hard at the man's face, but his features were immovable, so he noted down the fact forthwith.

“And how long do you keep him out at a time?” inquired Mr. Pickwick, searching for further information.

“Two or three weeks,” replied the man.

“Weeks!” said Mr. Pickwick in astonishment—and out came the note-book again.

“He lives at Pentonwil when he’s at home,” observed the driver, coolly, “but we seldom takes him home, on account of his weakness.”

“On account of his weakness!” reiterated the perplexed Mr. Pickwick.

“He always falls down when he’s took out of the cab,” continued the driver, “but when he’s in it, we bears him up werry tight, and takes him in werry short, so as he can’t werry well fall down; and we got a pair o’ precious large wheels on, so ven he *does* move, they run after him, and he must go on—he can’t help it.”

“**A**H! you should keep dogs—fine animals—sagacious creatures—dog of my own once—Pointer—surprising instinct—out shooting one day—entering inclosure—whistled—dog stopped—whistled again—Ponto—no go; stock still—called him—Ponto, Ponto—wouldn’t move—dog transfixed—staring at a board—looked up, saw an inscription—‘Game-keeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in this inclosure’—wouldn’t pass it—wonderful dog—valuable dog that—very.”

“**I**S the lady in England now, sir?” inquired Mr. Tupman, on whom the description of her charms had produced a powerful impression.

“Dead, sir—dead,” said the stranger, applying to his right eye the brief remnant of a very old cambric handkerchief. “Never recovered the stomach pump—undermined constitution—fell a victim.”

“And her father?” inquired the poetic Snodgrass.

“Remorse and misery,” replied the stranger. “Sudden disappearance—talk of the whole city—search made everywhere—without success—public fountain in the great square suddenly ceased playing—weeks elapsed—still a stoppage—workmen employed to clean it—water drawn off—father-in-law discovered sticking head first in the main pipe, with a full confession in his right boot—took him out, and the fountain played away again, as well as ever.”

“DON’T be frightened,” said the host.

“What’s the matter?” screamed the ladies.

“Mr. Tupman has met with a little accident; that’s all.”

The spinster aunt uttered a piercing scream, burst into an hysteric laugh, and fell backwards in the arms of her nieces.

“Throw some cold water over her,” said the old gentleman.

“No, no,” murmured the spinster aunt; “I am better now. Bella, Emily—a surgeon! Is he wounded? Is he dead? Is he—ha, ha, ha!” Here the spinster aunt burst into fit number two of hysteric laughter, interspersed with screams.

“Calm yourself,” said Mr. Tupman, affected almost to tears by this expression of sympathy with his sufferings. “Dear, dear madam, calm yourself.”

“It is his voice!” exclaimed the spinster aunt; and strong symptoms of fit number three developed themselves forthwith.

“Do not agitate yourself, I entreat you, dearest madam,” said Mr. Tupman soothingly. “I am very little hurt, I assure you.”

“Then you are not dead!” ejaculated the hysterical lady. “Oh, say you are not dead!”

“Don’t be a fool, Rachael,” interposed Mr. Wardle, rather more roughly than was quite consistent with the poetic nature of the scene. “What the devil’s the use of his *saying* he isn’t dead?”

“No, no, I am not,” said Mr. Tupman. “I require no assistance but yours. Let me lean on your arm.” He added,

in a whisper, "Oh, Miss Rachael!" The agitated female advanced, and offered her arm. They turned into the breakfast parlor. Mr. Tracy Tupman gently pressed her hand to his lips, and sank upon the sofa.

"Are you faint?" inquired the anxious Rachael.

"No," said Mr. Tupman. "It is nothing. I shall be better presently." He closed his eyes.

"He sleeps," murmured the spinster aunt. (His organs of vision had been closed nearly twenty seconds.) "Dear—dear—Mr. Tupman!"

Mr. Tupman jumped up—"Oh, say those words again!" he exclaimed.

The lady started. "Surely you did not hear them!" she said bashfully.

"Oh, yes I did!" replied Mr. Tupman: "repeat them; if you would have me recover, repeat them."

THIS constant succession of glasses produced considerable effect upon Mr. Pickwick: his countenance beamed with the most sunny smiles, laughter played around his lips, and good-humored merriment twinkled in his eye. Yielding by degrees to the influence of the exciting liquid, rendered more so by the heat, Mr. Pickwick expressed a strong desire to recollect a song which he had heard in his infancy, and the attempt proving abortive, sought to stimulate his memory with more glasses of punch, which appeared to have quite a contrary effect; for, from forgetting the words of the song, he began to forget how to articulate any words at all; and finally, after rising to his legs to address the company in an eloquent speech, he fell into the barrow and fast asleep, simultaneously.

"BEG your pardon, sir," said Wilkins, "but—" "But what? Eh?" roared the Captain; and following the timid glance of Wilkins, his eyes encountered the wheelbarrow and Mr. Pickwick.

“Who are you, you rascal?” said the Captain, administering several pokes to Mr. Pickwick’s body with the thick stick.

“What’s your name?”

“Cold punch,” murmured Mr. Pickwick, as he sunk to sleep again.

“What?” demanded Captain Boldwig.

No reply.

“What did he say his name was?” asked the Captain.

“Punch, I think, sir,” replied Wilkins.

“That’s his impudence, that’s his confounded impudence,” said Captain Boldwig. “He’s only feigning to be asleep now,” said the Captain, in a high passion. “He’s drunk; he’s a drunken plebeian. Wheel him away, Wilkins; wheel him away directly.”

“Where shall I wheel him to, sir?” inquired Wilkins, with great timidity.

“Wheel him to the Devil,” replied Captain Boldwig.

“Very well, sir,” said Wilkins.

“Stay,” said the Captain.

Wilkins stopped accordingly.

“Wheel him,” said the Captain, “wheel him to the pound; and let us see whether he calls himself Punch when he comes to himself. He shall not bully me, he shall not bully me. Wheel him away.”

Away Mr. Pickwick was wheeled, in compliance with this imperious mandate; and the great Captain Boldwig, swelling with indignation, proceeded on his walk.

Inexpressible was the astonishment of the little party when they returned, to find that Mr. Pickwick had disappeared, and taken the wheelbarrow with him. It was the most mysterious and unaccountable thing that was ever heard of. For a lame man to have got upon his legs without any previous notice, and walked off, would have been most extraordinary; but when it came to his wheeling a heavy barrow before him, by way of amusement, it grew positively miraculous.

“**I** AM very sorry to betray my master, sir,” said Job Trotter, applying to his eyes a pink-checked pocket-handkerchief about six inches square.

“The feeling does you a great deal of honor,” replied Mr. Pickwick ; “but it is your duty, nevertheless.”

“I know it is my duty, sir,” replied Job, with great emotion. “We should all try to discharge our duty, sir, and I humbly endeavor to discharge mine, sir ; but it is a hard trial to betray a master, sir, whose clothes you wear, and whose bread you eat, even though he is a scoundrel, sir.”

“You are a very good fellow,” said Mr. Pickwick, much affected, “an honest fellow.”

“Come, come,” interposed Sam, who had witnessed Mr. Trotter’s tears with considerable impatience, “blow this here water-cart bis’ness. It won’t do no good, this won’t.”

“Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick, reproachfully, “I am sorry to find that you have so little respect for this young man’s feelings.”

“His feelin’s is all wery well, sir,” replied Mr. Weller ; “and as they’re so wery fine, and it’s a pity he should lose ’em, I think he’d better keep ’em in his own buzzum, than let ’em ewaporate in hot water, ’specially as they do no good. Tears never yet wound up a clock, or worked a steam ingen’. The next time you go out to a smoking party, young fellow, fill your pipe with that ’ere reflection ; and for the present just put that bit of pink gingham into your pocket. ’Tan’t so handsome that you need keep waving it about, as if you was a tight-rope dancer.”

NOW, the cook no sooner heard the concluding words of this desperate challenge, and saw Mr. Muzzle about to put it into execution, than she uttered a loud and piercing shriek, and rushed on Mr. Job Trotter, who rose from his chair on the instant, tore and buffeted his large flat face, with an energy peculiar to excited females, and twining her hands in

his long black hair, tore therefrom about enough to make five or six dozen of the very largest-sized mourning-rings. Having accomplished this feat with all the ardor which her devoted love for Mr. Muzzle inspired, she staggered back ; and being a lady of very excitable and delicate feelings, she instantly fell under the dresser, and fainted away.

“**I**T is the best idea,” said Mr. Pickwick to himself, smiling till he almost cracked the nightcap strings : “it is the best idea, my losing myself in this place, and wandering about those staircases, that I ever heard of. Droll, droll, very droll.” Here Mr. Pickwick smiled again, a broader smile than before, and was about to continue the process of undressing, in the best possible humor, when he was suddenly stopped by a most unexpected interruption ; to wit, the entrance into the room of some person with a candle, who, after locking the door, advanced to the dressing-table, and set down the light upon it.

The smile that played on Mr. Pickwick’s features was instantaneously lost in a look of the most unbounded and wonder-stricken surprise. The person, whoever it was, had come in so suddenly and with so little noise, that Mr. Pickwick had had no time to call out, or oppose their entrance. Who could it be ? A robber ? Some evil-minded person who had seen him come upstairs with a handsome watch in his hand, perhaps. What was he to do ?

The only way in which Mr. Pickwick could catch a glimpse of his mysterious visitor with the least danger of being seen himself, was by creeping on to the bed, and peeping out from between the curtains on the opposite side. To this manœuvre he accordingly resorted. Keeping the curtains carefully closed with his hand, so that nothing more of him could be seen than his face and nightcap, and putting on his spectacles, he mustered up courage and looked out.

Mr. Pickwick almost fainted with horror and dismay. Standing before the dressing-glass was a middle-aged lady, in yellow

curl-papers, busily engaged in brushing what ladies call their "back-hair." However the unconscious middle-aged lady came into that room, it was quite clear that she contemplated remaining there for the night ; for she had brought a rush-light and shade with her, which, with praiseworthy precaution against fire, she had stationed in a basin on the floor, where it was glimmering away, like a gigantic light-house in a particularly small piece of water.

"Bless my soul," thought Mr. Pickwick, "what a dreadful thing !"

"Hem !" said the lady ; and in went Mr. Pickwick's head with automaton-like rapidity.

"I never met with anything so awful as this," thought poor Mr. Pickwick, the cold perspiration starting in drops upon his nightcap. "Never. This is fearful."

It was quite impossible to resist the urgent desire to see what was going forward. So out went Mr. Pickwick's head again. The prospect was worse than before. The middle-aged lady had finished arranging her hair : had carefully enveloped it in a muslin night-cap with a small plaited border ; and was gazing pensively on the fire.

"This matter is growing alarming," reasoned Mr. Pickwick with himself. "I can't allow things to go on in this way. By the self-possession of that lady it is clear to me that I must have come into the wrong room. If I call out she'll alarm the house ; but if I remain here the consequences will still be more frightful."

Mr. Pickwick, it is quite unnecessary to say, was one of the most modest and delicate-minded of mortals. The very idea of exhibiting his nightcap to a lady overpowered him, but he had tied those confounded strings in a knot, and do what he would, he couldn't get it off. The disclosure must be made. There was only one other way of doing it. He shrunk behind the curtains, and called out very loudly :

"Ha—hum !"

That the lady started at this unexpected sound, was evident

by her falling up against the rush-light shade ; that she persuaded herself it must have been the effect of imagination, was equally clear, for when Mr. Pickwick, under the impression that she had fainted away stone-dead from fright, ventured to peep out again, she was gazing pensively on the fire as before.

“Most extraordinary female this,” thought Mr. Pickwick, popping in again. “Ha—hum !”

These last sounds, so like those in which, as legends inform us, the ferocious giant Blunderbore was in the habit of expressing his opinion that it was time to lay the cloth, were too distinctly audible to be again mistaken for the workings of fancy.

“Gracious Heaven !” said the middle-aged lady, “what is that ?”

“It’s—it’s—only a gentleman, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick from behind the curtains.

“A gentleman !” said the lady with a terrific scream.

“It’s all over !” thought Mr. Pickwick.

“A strange man !” shrieked the lady. Another instant and the house would be alarmed. Her garments rustled as she rushed towards the door.

“Ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick, thrusting out his head, in the extremity of his desperation, “ma’am !”

Now, although Mr. Pickwick was not actuated by any definite object in putting out his head, it was instantaneously productive of a good effect. The lady, as we have already stated, was near the door. She must pass it to reach the staircase, and she would most undoubtedly have done so by this time, had not the sudden apparition of Mr. Pickwick’s nightcap driven her back into the remotest corner of the apartment, where she stood staring wildly at Mr. Pickwick, while Mr. Pickwick in his turn stared wildly at her.

“Wretch,” said the lady, covering her eyes with her hands, “what do you want here ?”

“Nothing, ma’am ; nothing, whatever, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick earnestly.

“Nothing !” said the lady, looking up.

“Nothing, ma’am, upon my honor,” said Mr. Pickwick, nodding his head so energetically that the tassel of his night-cap danced again. “I am almost ready to sink, ma’am, beneath the confusion of addressing a lady in my night-cap [here the lady hastily snatched off hers], but I can’t get it off, ma’am [here Mr. Pickwick gave it a tremendous tug, in proof of the statement]. It is evident to me, ma’am, now, that I have mistaken this bedroom for my own. I had not been here five minutes, ma’am, when you suddenly entered it.”

“If this improbable story be really true, sir,” said the lady, sobbing violently, “you will leave it instantly.”

“I will, ma’am, with the greatest pleasure,” replied Mr. Pickwick.

“Instantly, sir,” said the lady.

“Certainly, ma’am,” interposed Mr. Pickwick very quickly. “Certainly, ma’am. I—I—am very sorry, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick, making his appearance at the bottom of the bed, “to have been the innocent occasion of this alarm and emotion; deeply sorry, ma’am.”

The lady pointed to the door. One excellent quality of Mr. Pickwick’s character was beautifully displayed at this moment, under the most trying circumstances. Although he had hastily put on his hat over his nightcap, after the manner of the old patrol; although he carried his shoes and gaiters in his hand, and his coat and waistcoat over his arm; nothing could subdue his native politeness.

“I am exceedingly sorry, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick, bowing very low.

“If you are, sir, you will at once leave the room,” said the lady.

“Immediately, ma’am; this instant, ma’am,” said Mr. Pickwick, opening the door, and dropping both his shoes with a crash in so doing.

“I trust, ma’am,” resumed Mr. Pickwick, gathering up his shoes, and turning round to bow again: “I trust, ma’am, that my unblemished character, and the devoted respect I enter-

tain for your sex, will plead as some slight excuse for this"—But before Mr. Pickwick could conclude the sentence the lady had thrust him into the passage, and locked and bolted the door behind him.

“WERRY nice pork-shop that ’ere, sir.”

“Yes, it seems so,” said Mr. Pickwick.

“Celebrated Sassage factory,” said Sam.

“Is it?” said Mr. Pickwick.

“Is it!” reiterated Sam with some indignation; “I should rayther think it was. Why, sir, bless your innocent eyebrows, that’s where the mysterious disappearance of a ’spectable tradesman took place four year ago.”

“You don’t mean to say he was burked, Sam?” said Mr. Pickwick, looking hastily round.

“No, I don’t indeed, sir,” replied Mr. Weller, “I wish I did; far worse than that. He was the master o’ that ’ere shop, sir, and the inwenter o’ the patent-never-leavin’-of sassage steam ingine, as ud swaller up a pavin’ stone if you put it too near, and grind it into sassages as easy as if it was a tender young babby. Werry proud o’ that machine he was, as it was nat’ral he should be, and he’d stand down in the celler a-lookin’ at it wen it was in full play, till he got quite melancholy with joy. A werry happy man he’d ha’ been, sir, in the procession o’ that ’ere ingine and two more lovely hinfants besides, if it hadn’t been for his wife, who was a most ow-dacious wixin. She was always follerin’ him about, and dinnin’ in his ears, ’till at last he couldn’t stand it no longer. ‘I’ll tell you what it is, my dear,’ he says one day; ‘if you persewere in this here sort of amusement,’ he says, ‘I’m blessed if I don’t go away to ’Merriker; and that’s all about it.’ ‘You’re a idle willin,’ says she, ‘and I wish the ’Merrikins joy of their bargain.’ Arter wich she keeps on abusin’ of him for half an hour, and then runs into the little parlor behind the shop, sets to a screamin’, says he’ll be the death on her, and falls in a fit, which lasts for three good hours—one o’ them fits which is all screamin’ and kickin’. Well,

next mornin', the husband was missin'. He hadn't taken nothin' from the till—hadn't even put on his great-coat—so it was quite clear he warn't gone to Merriker. Didn't come back next day ; didn't come back next week ; missis had bill printed, sayin' that, if he'd come back, he should be forgiven everythin' (which was very liberal, seein' that he hadn't done nothin' at all) ; the canals was dragged, and for two months arterwards, wenever a body turned up, it was carried, as a reg'lar thing, straight off to the sassage shop. Hows'ever, none on 'em answered ; so they gave out that he'd run away, and she kept on the bis'ness. One Saturday night, a little thin old gen'l'm'n comes into the shop in a great passion and says, 'Are you the missis o' this here shop?' 'Yes, I am,' says she. 'Well, ma'am,' says he, 'then I've just looked in to say that me and my family ain't a-goin' to be choked for nothin' ; and more than that, ma'am,' he says, 'you'll allow me to observe, that as you don't use the primest parts of the meat in the manufacture o' sassages, I think you'd find beef come nearly as cheap as buttons.' 'As buttons, sir !' says she. 'Buttons, ma'am,' says the little old gentleman, unfolding a bit of paper, and showin' twenty or thirty halves of buttons. 'Nice seasonin' for sassages, is trousers' buttons, ma'am.' 'They're my husband's buttons !' says the widder, beginning to faint. 'What !' screams the little old gen'l'm'n, turnin' wery pale. 'I see it all,' says the widder ; 'in a fit of temporary insanity he rashly converted his-self into sassages !' And so he had, sir," said Mr. Weller ; looking steadily into Mr. Pickwick's horror-stricken countenance, "or else he'd been draw'd into the ingine ; but however that might ha' been, the little old gen'l'm'n, who had been remarkably partial to sassages all his life, rushed out o' the shop in a wild state, and was never heerd on arterwards !"

"BY the bye, Bob," said Hopkins, with a scarcely perceptible glance at Mr. Pickwick's attentive face, "we had a curious accident last night. A child was brought in who had swallowed a necklace."

"Swallowed what, sir?" interrupted Mr. Pickwick.

"A necklace," replied Jack Hopkins. "Not all at once, you know, that would be too much—you couldn't swallow that, if the child did—eh, Mr. Pickwick, ha! ha!" Mr. Hopkins appeared highly gratified with his own pleasantry; and continued. "No, the way was this. Child's parents were poor people who lived in a court. Child's eldest sister bought a necklace; common necklace, made of large black wooden beads. Child, being fond of toys, cribbed the necklace, hid it, played with it, cut the string, and swallowed a bead. Child thought it capital fun, went back next day, and swallowed another bead."

"Bless my heart," said Mr. Pickwick, "what a dreadful thing! I beg your pardon, sir. Go on."

"Next day, child swallowed two beads; the day after that, he treated himself to three, and so on, till in a week's time he had got through the necklace—five-and-twenty beads in all. The sister, who was an industrious girl, and seldom treated herself to a bit of finery, cried her eyes out at the loss of the necklace; looked high and low for it; but, I needn't say, didn't find it. A few days afterwards, the family were at dinner—baked shoulder of mutton, and potatoes under it—the child, who wasn't hungry, was playing about the room, when suddenly there was heard a devil of a noise, like a small hail-storm. 'Don't do that, my boy,' said the father. 'I ain't a-doin' nothing,' said the child. 'Well, don't do it again,' said the father. There was a short silence, and then the noise began again, worse than ever. 'If you don't mind what I say, my boy,' said the father, 'you'll find yourself in bed, in something less than a pig's whisper.' He gave the child a shake to make him obedient, and such a rattling ensued as nobody ever heard before. 'Why, damme, it's *in* the child!' said the father; 'he's got the croup in the wrong place!' 'No, I haven't, father,' said the child, beginning to cry, 'it's the necklace; I swallowed it, father.'—The father caught the child up, and ran with him to the hospital: the beads in the boy's stomach

rattling all the way with the jolting ; and the people looking up in the air, and down in the cellars, to see where the unusual sound came from. He's in the hospital now," said Jack Hopkins, "and he makes such a devil of a noise when he walks about, that they're obliged to muffle him in a watchman's coat, for fear he should wake the patients !"

"SHE'S a fine woman," said Mr. Dowler. "I am proud of her. I have reason."

"I hope I shall have the pleasure of judging," said Mr. Pickwick, with a smile.

"You shall," replied Dowler. "She shall know you. She shall esteem you. I courted her under singular circumstances. I won her through a rash vow. Thus. I saw her ; I loved her ; I proposed ; she refused me.—'You love another ?'—'Spare my blushes.'—'I know him.'—'You do.'—'Very good ; if he remains here, I'll skin him.'"

"Lord bless me !" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, involuntarily.

"Did you skin the gentleman, sir ?" inquired Mr. Winkle, with a very pale face.

"I wrote him a note. I said it was a painful thing. And so it was."

"Certainly," interposed Mr. Winkle.

"I said I had pledged my word as a gentleman to skin him. My character was at stake. I had no alternative. As an officer in His Majesty's service I was bound to skin him. I regretted the necessity, but it must be done. He was open to conviction. He saw that the rules of the service were imperative. He fled. I married her."

MR. PICKWICK went to his bedchamber, and Mr. Dowler resumed his seat before the fire, in fulfilment of his rash promise to sit up till his wife came home.

There are few things more worrying than sitting up for some-

body, especially if that somebody be at a party. You cannot help thinking how quickly the time passes with them, which drags so heavily with you; and the more you think of this, the more your hopes of their speedy arrival decline. Clocks tick so loud, too, when you are sitting up alone, and you seem as if you had an under-garment of cobwebs on. First, something tickles your right knee, and then the same sensation irritates your left. You have no sooner changed your position, than it comes again in the arms; when you have fidgeted your limbs into all sorts of odd shapes, you have a sudden relapse in the nose, which you rub as if to rub it off—as there is no doubt you would, if you could. Eyes, too, are mere personal inconveniences; and the wick of one candle gets an inch and a half long, while you are snuffing the other. These, and various other little nervous annoyances, render sitting up for a length of time after everybody else has gone to bed, anything but a cheerful amusement.

This was just Mr. Dowler's opinion, as he sat before the fire, and felt honestly indignant with all the inhuman people at the party, who were keeping him up. He was not put into better humor either, by the reflection that he had taken it into his head, early in the evening, to think he had got an ache there, and so stopped at home. At length, after several droppings asleep, and fallings forward towards the bars, and catchings backward soon enough to prevent being branded in the face, Mr. Dowler made up his mind that he would throw himself on the bed in the backroom and *think*—not sleep of course.

"I'm a heavy sleeper," said Mr. Dowler, as he flung himself on the bed. "I must keep awake. I suppose I shall hear a knock here. Yes; I thought so. I can hear the watchman. There he goes. Fainter now though. A little fainter. He's turning the corner. Ah!" When Mr. Dowler arrived at this point, he turned the corner at which he had been long hesitating, and fell fast asleep.

Just as the clock struck three, there was blown into the

Crescent a sedan-chair with Mrs. Dowler inside, borne by one short fat chairman, and one long thin one, who had had much ado to keep their bodies perpendicular ; to say nothing of the chair. But on that high ground, and in the Crescent, which the wind swept round and round, as if it were going to tear the paving stones up, its fury was tremendous. They were very glad to set the chair down, and give a good round loud double knock at the street door.

They waited some time, but nobody came.

"Servants is in the arms o' Porpus, I think," said the short chairman, warming his hands at the attendant link-boy's torch.

"I wish he'd give 'em a squeeze and wake 'em," observed the long one.

"Knock again, will you, if you please," cried Mrs. Dowler from the chair. "Knock two or three times, if you please."

The short man was quite willing to get the job over, as soon as possible ; so he stood on the step, and gave four or five most startling double knocks, of eight or ten knocks apiece ; while the long man went into the road, and looked up at the windows for a light.

Nobody came. It was all as silent and dark as ever.

"Dear me !" said Mrs. Dowler. "You must knock again, if you please."

"There ain't a bell, is there, ma'am ?" said the short chairman.

"Yes, there is," interposed the link-boy, "I've been a-ringing at it ever so long."

"It's only a handle," said Mrs. Dowler, "the wire's broken."

"I wish the servants' heads wos," growled the long man.

"I must trouble you to knock again, if you please," said Mrs. Dowler, with the utmost politeness.

The short man did knock again several times, without producing the smallest effect. The tall man, growing very impatient, then relieved him, and kept on perpetually knocking double knocks of two loud knocks each, like an insane post-man.

At length Mr. Winkle began to dream that he was at a club, and that the members being very refractory, the chairman was obliged to hammer the table a good deal to preserve order ; then, he had a confused notion of an auction-room where there were no bidders, and the auctioneer was buying everything in ; and ultimately he began to think it just within the bounds of possibility that somebody might be knocking at the street door. To make quite certain, however, he remained quiet in bed for ten minutes or so, and listened ; and when he had counted two or three and thirty knocks, he felt quite satisfied, and gave himself a great deal of credit for being so wakeful.

“Rap rap—rap rap—rap rap—ra, ra, ra, ra, ra, rap !” went the knocker.

Mr. Winkle jumped out of bed, wondering very much what could possibly be the matter, and hastily putting on his stockings and slippers, folded his dressing-gown round him, lighted a flat candle from the rush-light that was burning in the fireplace, and hurried downstairs.

“Here’s somebody comin’ at last, ma’am,” said the short chairman.

“I wish I was behind him with a bradawl,” muttered the long one.

“Who’s there ?” cried Mr. Winkle, undoing the chain.

“Don’t stop to ask questions, cast-iron head,” replied the long man, with great disgust, taking it for granted that the inquirer was a footman, “but open the door.”

“Come, look sharp, timber eyelids,” added the other encouragingly.

Mr. Winkle, being half asleep, obeyed the command mechanically, opened the door a little, and peeped out. The first thing he saw was the red glare of the link-boy’s torch. Startled by the sudden fear that the house might be on fire, he hastily threw the door wide open, and holding the candle above his head, stared eagerly before him, not quite certain whether what he saw was a sedan-chair or a fire-engine. At this instant there came a violent gust of wind ; the light was blown out ; Mr.

Winkle felt himself irresistibly impelled on to the steps ; and the door blew to, with a loud crash.

“Well, young man, now you *have* done it !” said the short chairman.

Mr. Winkle, catching sight of a lady’s face at the window of the sedan, turned hastily round, plied the knocker with all his might and main, and called frantically upon the chairmen to take the chair away again.

“Take it away, take it away,” cried Mr. Winkle. “Here’s somebody coming out of another house ; put me into the chair. Hide me ! Do something for me !”

All this time he was shivering with cold ; and every time he raised his hand to the knocker, the wind took the dressing-gown in a most unpleasant manner.

“The people are coming down the Crescent now. There are ladies with ’em ; cover me up with something. Stand before me !” roared Mr. Winkle. But the chairmen were too much exhausted with laughing to afford him the slightest assistance, and the ladies were every moment approaching nearer and nearer.

Mr. Winkle gave a last hopeless knock ; the ladies were only a few doors off. He threw away the extinguished candle, which, all this time, he had held above his head, and fairly bolted into the sedan-chair where Mrs. Dowler was.

Now, Mrs. Craddock had heard the knocking and the voices at last ; and, only waiting to put something smarter on her head than her nightcap, ran down into the front drawing-room to make sure that it was the right party. Throwing up the window-sash as Mr. Winkle was rushing into the chair, she no sooner caught sight of what was going forward below, than she raised a vehement and dismal shriek, and implored Mr. Dowler to get up directly, for his wife was running away with another gentleman.

Upon this, Mr. Dowler bounced off the bed as abruptly as an India-rubber ball, and rushing into the front room, arrived at one window just as Mr. Pickwick threw up the other ; when

the first object that met the gaze of both, was Mr. Winkle bolting into the sedan-chair.

“Watchman,” shouted Dowler, furiously; “stop him—hold him—keep him tight—shut him in, till I come down. I’ll cut his throat—give me a knife—from ear to ear, Mrs. Craddock—I will!” And breaking from the shrieking landlady, and from Mr. Pickwick, the indignant husband seized a small supper-knife, and tore into the street.

But Mr. Winkle didn’t wait for him. He no sooner heard the horrible threat of the valorous Dowler, than he bounced out of the sedan, quite as quickly as he had bounced in, and throwing off his slippers into the road, took to his heels and tore round the Crescent, hotly pursued by Dowler and the watchman. He kept ahead, the door was open as he came round the second time; he rushed in, slammed it in Dowler’s face, mounted to his bedroom, locked the door, piled a wash-hand-stand, chest of drawers, and table against it, and packed up a few necessaries ready for flight with the first ray of morning.

Dowler came up to the outside of the door; avowed, through the key-hole, his steadfast determination of cutting Mr. Winkle’s throat next day; and, after a great confusion of voices in the drawing-room, amidst which that of Mr. Pickwick was distinctly heard endeavoring to make peace, the inmates dispersed to their several bedchambers, and all was quiet once more.

“**D**ID you leave all the medicine?”

“Yes, sir.”

“The powders for the child, at the large house with the new family, and the pills to be taken four times a day at the ill-tempered old gentleman’s with the gouty leg?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Then shut the door, and mind the shop.”

“Come,” said Mr. Winkle, as the boy retired, “things are not quite so bad as you would have me believe, either. There is *some* medicine to be sent out.”

Mr. Bob Sawyer peeped into the shop to see that no stranger was within hearing, and leaning forward to Mr. Winkle, said in a low tone :

“ He leaves it all at the wrong houses.”

Mr. Winkle looked perplexed, and Bob Sawyer and his friend laughed.

“ Don’t you see ? ” said Bob. “ He goes up to a house, rings the area bell, pokes a packet of medicine without a direction into the servant’s hand, and walks off. Servant takes it into the dining-parlor ; master opens it, and reads the label : ‘ Draught to be taken at bedtime—pills as before—lotion as usual—*the* powder. From Sawyer’s, late Nockemorf’s. Physicians’ prescriptions carefully prepared,’ and all the rest of it. Shows it to his wife—*she* reads the label ; it goes down to the servants—*they* read the label. Next day, boy calls : ‘ Very sorry—his mistake—immense business—great many parcels to deliver—Mr. Sawyer’s compliments—late Nockemorf.’ The name gets known, and that’s the thing, my boy, in the medical way. Bless your heart, old fellow, it’s better than all the advertising in the world. We have got one four-ounce bottle that’s been to half the houses in Bristol, and hasn’t done yet.”

“ Dear me, I see,” observed Mr. Winkle ; “ what an excellent plan ! ”

“ Oh, Ben and I have hit upon a dozen such,” replied Bob Sawyer, with great glee. “ The lamplighter has eighteenpence a week to pull the night-bell for ten minutes every time he comes round ; and my boy always rushes into church, just before the psalms, when the people have got nothing to do but look about ’em, and calls me out, with horror and dismay depicted on his countenance. ‘ Bless my soul,’ everybody says, ‘ somebody taken suddenly ill ! Sawyer, late Nockemorf, sent for. What a business that young man has ! ’ ”

At the termination of this disclosure of some of the mysteries of medicine, Mr. Bob Sawyer and his friend, Ben Allen, threw themselves back in their respective chairs, and laughed boisterously. When they had enjoyed the joke to their hearts’

content, the discourse changed to topics in which Mr. Winkle was more immediately interested.

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

“PAPA ! what’s money ?”

The abrupt question had such immediate reference to the subject of Mr. Dombey’s thoughts, that Mr. Dombey was quite disconcerted.

“What is money, Paul ?” he answered. “Money ?”

“Yes,” said the child, laying his hands upon the elbows of his little chair, and turning the old face up towards Mr. Dombey’s ; “what is money ?”

Mr. Dombey was in a difficulty. He would have liked to give him some explanation involving the terms circulating medium, currency, depreciation of currency, paper, bullion, rates of exchange, value of precious metals in the market, and so forth ; but looking down at the little chair, and seeing what a long way down it was, he answered : “Gold, and silver, and copper. Guineas, shillings, halfpence. You know what they are ?”

“Oh yes, I know what they are,” said Paul. “I don’t mean that, papa. I mean what’s money after all.”

Heaven and Earth, how old his face was as he turned it up again towards his father’s !

“What is money after all !” said Mr. Dombey, backing his chair a little, that he might the better gaze in sheer amazement at the presumptuous atom that propounded such an inquiry.

“I mean, papa, what can it do ?” returned Paul, folding his arms (they were hardly long enough to fold), and looking at the fire, and up at him, and at the fire, and up at him again.

Mr. Dombey drew his chair back to its former place, and

patted him on the head. "You'll know better by and by, my man," he said. "Money, Paul, can do anything." He took hold of the little hand, and beat it softly against one of his own, as he said so.

But Paul got his hand free as soon as he could; and rubbing it gently to and fro on the elbow of his chair, as if his wit were in the palm, and he were sharpening it—and looking at the fire again, as though the fire had been his adviser and prompter—repeated, after a short pause:

"Anything, papa?"

"Yes. Anything—almost," said Mr. Dombey.

"Anything means everything, don't it, papa?" asked his son: not observing, or possibly not understanding, the qualification.

"It includes it: yes," said Mr. Dombey.

"Why didn't money save me my mamma?" returned the child. "It isn't cruel, is it?"

"Cruel!" said Mr. Dombey, settling his neckcloth, and seeming to resent the idea. "No. A good thing can't be cruel."

"If it's a good thing, and can do anything," said the little fellow, thoughtfully, as he looked back at the fire, "I wonder why it didn't save me my mamma."

"**P**AUL, come."

The child obeyed; and Mr. Dombey took him on his knee.

"If you had money now—" said Mr. Dombey. "Look at me!"

Paul, whose eyes had wandered to his sister, and to Walter, looked his father in the face.

"If you had money now," said Mr. Dombey; "as much money as young Gay has talked about, what would you do?"

"Give it to his old uncle," returned Paul.

"Lend it to his old uncle, eh?" retorted Mr. Dombey.

“Well ! When you are old enough, you know, you will share my money, and we shall use it together.”

“Dombey and Son,” interrupted Paul, who had been tutored early in the phrase.

“Dombey and Son,” repeated his father. “Would you like to begin to be Dombey and Son, now, and lend this money to young Gay’s uncle ?”

“Oh ! if you please, papa !” said Paul : “and so would Florence.”

“Girls,” said Mr. Dombey, “have nothing to do with Dombey and Son. Would *you* like it ?”

“Yes, papa, yes !”

“Then you shall do it,” returned his father. “And you see, Paul,” he added, dropping his voice, “how powerful money is, and how anxious people are to get it. Young Gay comes all this way to beg for money, and you, who are so grand and great, having got it, are going to let him have it, as a great favor and obligation.”

“**I** MUST beg you not to mention Mrs. Pipchin to me, on any account, Dombey,” returned Miss Blimber. “I couldn’t think of allowing it. The course of study here is very far removed from anything of that sort. A repetition of such allusions would make it necessary for me to request to hear, without a mistake, before breakfast-time to-morrow morning, from *Verbum personale* down to *simillima cygno*.”

“I didn’t mean, ma’am—” began little Paul.

“I must trouble you not to tell me that you didn’t mean, if you please, Dombey,” said Miss Blimber, who preserved an awful politeness in her admonitions. “That is a line of argument I couldn’t dream of permitting.”

Paul felt it safest to say nothing at all, so he only looked at Miss Blimber’s spectacles. Miss Blimber, having shaken her head at him gravely, referred to a paper lying before her.

“ ‘Analysis of the character of P. Dombey.’ If my recollec-

tion serves me," said Miss Blimber, breaking off, "the word analysis, as opposed to synthesis, is thus defined by Walker: 'The resolution of an object, whether of the senses or of the intellect, into its first elements.' As opposed to synthesis, you observe. *Now* you know what analysis is, Dombey."

Dombey didn't seem to be absolutely blinded by the light let in upon his intellect, but he made Miss Blimber a little bow.

"'Analysis,'" resumed Miss Blimber, casting her eye over the paper, "'of the character of P. Dombey.' I find that the natural capacity of Dombey is extremely good; and that his general disposition to study may be stated in an equal ratio. Thus, taking eight as our standard and highest number, I find these qualities in Dombey stated each at six three-fourths."

Miss Blimber paused to see how Paul received this news. Being undecided whether six three-fourths, meant six pounds fifteen, or sixpence three farthings, or six foot three, or three quarters past six, or six somethings that he hadn't learnt yet, with three unknown something elses over, Paul rubbed his hands and looked straight at Miss Blimber. It happened to answer as well as anything else he could have done; and Cornelia proceeded.

"SO hurrah for the West Indies, Captain Cuttle! How does that tune go that the sailors sing?"

"For the Port of Barbadoes, boys!

Cheerily!

Leaving old England behind us, boys!

Cheerily!"

Here the Captain roared in chorus—

"Oh cheerily, cheerily!

Oh cheer—i—ly!"

The last line reaching the quick ears of an ardent skipper not quite sober, who lodged opposite, and who instantly sprang out of bed, threw up his window, and joined in, across the

street, at the top of his voice, produced a fine effect. When it was impossible to sustain the concluding note any longer, the skipper bellowed forth a terrific "ahoy!" intended in part as a friendly greeting, and in part to show that he was not at all breathed. That done, he shut down his window, and went to bed again.

THE Captain immediately drew Walter into a corner, and with a great effort, that made his face very red, pulled up the silver watch, which was so big, and so tight in his pocket, that it came out like a bung.

"Wal'r," said the Captain, handing it over, and shaking him heartily by the hand, "a parting gift, my lad. Put it back half an hour every morning, and about another quarter towards the arternoon, and it's a watch that'll do you credit."

"Captain Cuttle! I couldn't think of it!" cried Walter, detaining him, for he was running away. "Pray take it back. I have one already."

"Then, Wal'r," said the Captain, suddenly diving into one of his pockets and bringing up the two teaspoons and the sugar-tongs, with which he had armed himself to meet such an objection, "take this here trifle of plate instead."

"No, no, I couldn't indeed!" cried Walter; "a thousand thanks! Don't throw them away, Captain Cuttle!" for the Captain was about to jerk them overboard. "They'll be of much more use to you than me. Give me your stick. I have often thought that I should like to have it. There! Good-by, Captain Cuttle! take care of my uncle! Uncle Sol, God bless you!"

AT the moment when Florence and Susan Nipper presented themselves at Mrs. MacStinger's door, that worthy but redoubtable female was in the act of conveying Alexander MacStinger, aged two years and three months, along the pass-

age for forcible deposition in a sitting posture on the street pavement ; Alexander being black in the face with holding his breath after punishment, and a cool paving-stone being usually found to act as a powerful restorative in such cases.

The feelings of Mrs. MacStinger, as a woman and a mother, were outraged by the look of pity for Alexander which she observed on Florence's face. Therefore, Mrs. MacStinger asserting those finest emotions of our nature, in preference to weakly gratifying her curiosity, shook and buffeted Alexander both before and during the application of the paving-stone, and took no further notice of the strangers.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am, said Florence, when the child had found his breath again, and using it. "Is this Captain Cuttle's house?"

"No," said Mrs. MacStinger.

"Not Number Nine?" asked Florence hesitatingly.

"Who said it wasn't Number Nine?" asked Mrs. MacStinger.

Susan Nipper instantly struck in, and begged to inquire what Mrs. MacStinger meant by that, and if she knew whom she was talking to.

Mrs. MacStinger, in retort, looked at her all over. "What do *you* want with Captain Cuttle, I should wish to know?" said Mrs. MacStinger.

"Should you? Then I'm sorry that you won't be satisfied," returned Miss Nipper.

"Hush, Susan! if you please!" said Florence. "Perhaps you can have the goodness to tell us where Captain Cuttle lives, ma'am, as he don't live here."

"Who says he don't live here?" retorted the implacable MacStinger. "I said it wasn't Cap'en Cuttle's house—and it ain't his house—and forbid it, that it ever should be his house—for Cap'en Cuttle don't know how to keep a house—and don't deserve to have a house—it's *my* house—and when I let the upper floor to Cap'en Cuttle, oh I do a thankless thing, and cast pearls before swine!"

Mrs. MacStinger pitched her voice for the upper windows in offering these remarks, and cracked off each clause sharply by itself as if from a rifle possessing an infinity of barrels. After the last shot, the Captain's voice was heard to say in feeble remonstrance from his own room, "Steady below!"

"IF you please, ma'am, I beg your pardon, but I can't do nothing with missis!"

"What do you mean?" asked Edith.

"Well, ma'am," replied the frightened maid, "I hardly know. She's making faces."

Edith hurried with her to her mother's room. Cleopatra was arrayed in full dress, with the diamonds, short-sleeves, rouge, curls, teeth, and other juvenility all complete; but Paralysis was not to be deceived, had known her for the object of its errand, and had struck her at her glass, where she lay like a horrible doll that had tumbled down.

They took her to pieces in very shame, and put the little of her that was real on a bed. Doctors were sent for, and soon came. Powerful remedies were resorted to; opinions given that she would rally from this shock, but would not survive another; and there she lay speechless, and staring at the ceiling for days; sometimes making inarticulate sounds in answer to such questions as did she know who were present, and the like; sometimes giving no reply either by sign or gesture, or in her unwinking eyes.

At length she began to recover consciousness, and in some degree the power of motion, though not yet of speech. One day the use of her right hand returned; and showing it to her maid, who was in attendance on her, and appearing very uneasy in her mind, she made signs for a pencil and some paper. This the maid immediately provided, thinking she was going to make a will, or write some last request; and Mrs. Dombey being from home, the maid awaited the result with solemn feelings.

After much painful scrawling and erasing, and putting in of wrong characters, which seemed to tumble out of the pencil of their own accord, the old woman produced this document :

“Rose-colored curtains.”

The maid being perfectly transfixed, and with tolerable reason, Cleopatra amended the manuscript by adding two words more, when it stood thus :

“Rose-colored curtains for doctors.”

The maid now perceived remotely that she wished these articles to be provided for the better presentation of her complexion to the faculty ; and as those in the house who knew her best had no doubt of the correctness of this opinion, which she was soon able to establish for herself, the rose-colored curtains were added to her bed, and she mended with increased rapidity from that hour. She was soon able to sit up, in curls and a laced cap and night-gown, and to have a little artificial bloom dropped into the hollow caverns of her cheeks.

It was a tremendous sight to see this old woman in her finery leering and mincing at death, and playing off her youthful tricks upon him as if he had been the Major ; but an alteration in her mind that ensued on the paralytic stroke was fraught with as much matter for reflection, and was quite as ghastly.

“**M**ISS DOMBEY, I beg your pardon,” says Mr. Toots, in a sad fluster, “but if you would allow me to—to—”

The smiling and unconscious look of Florence brings him to a dead stop.

“If you would allow me to—if you would not consider it a liberty, Miss Dombey, if I was to—without any encouragement at all, if I was to hope, you know,” says Mr. Toots.

Florence looks at him inquiringly.

“Miss Dombey,” said Mr. Toots, who feels that he is in for it now, “I really am in that state of adoration of you that I

don't know what to do with myself. I am the most deplorable wretch. If it wasn't at the corner of the Square at present, I should go down on my knees, and beg and entreat of you, without any encouragement at all, just to let me hope that I may—may think it possible that you—”

“Oh, if you please, don't!” cries Florence, for the moment quite alarmed and distressed. “Oh, pray don't, Mr. Toots. Stop, if you please. Don't say any more. As a kindness and a favor to me, don't.”

Mr. Toots is dreadfully abashed, and his mouth opens.

“You have been so good to me,” says Florence, “I am so grateful to you, I have such reason to like you for being a kind friend to me, and I do like you so much;” and here the ingenuous face smiles upon him with the pleasantest look of honesty in the world, “that I am sure you are only going to say good-by.”

“Certainly, Miss Dombey,” says Mr. Toots, “I—I—That's exactly what I mean. It's of no consequence.”

“Good-by!” cries Florence.

“Good-by, Miss Dombey!” stammers Mr. Toots. “I hope you won't think anything about it. It's—it's of no consequence, thank you. It's not of the least consequence in the world.”

THE Captain made many attempts to accost the philosopher, if only in a monosyllable or a signal; but always failed, in consequence of the vigilance of the guard, and the difficulty at all times peculiar to Bunsby's constitution, of having his attention aroused by any outward and visible sign whatever. Thus they approached the chapel, a neat, whitewashed edifice, recently engaged by the Reverend Melchisedech Howler, who had consented, on very urgent solicitation, to give the world another two years of existence, but had informed his followers that, then, it must positively go.

While the Reverend Melchisedech was offering up some ex-

temporary orisons, the Captain found an opportunity of growling in the bridegroom's ear :

"What cheer, my lad, what cheer?"

To which Bunsby replied, with a forgetfulness of the Reverend Melchisedech, which nothing but his desperate circumstances could have excused :

"D—d bad."

"Jack Bunsby," whispered the Captain, "do you do this here o' your own free will?"

Mr. Bunsby answered "No."

"Why do you do it then, my lad?" inquired the Captain, not unnaturally.

Bunsby, still looking, and always looking with an immovable countenance at the opposite side of the world, made no reply.

"Why not sheer off?" said the Captain.

"Eh?" whispered Bunsby, with a momentary gleam of hope.

"Sheer off," said the Captain.

"Where's the good?" retorted the forlorn sage. "She'd capter me agen."

"Try!" replied the Captain. "Cheer up! Come! Now's your time. Sheer off, Jack Bunsby!"

Jack Bunsby, however, instead of profiting by the advice, said in a doleful whisper :

"It all began in that there chest o' yourn. Why did I ever convoy her into port that night?"

"My lad," faltered the Captain, "I thought as you had come over her; not as she had come over you. A man as has got such opinions as you have!"

Mr. Bunsby merely uttered a suppressed groan.

"Come!" said the Captain, nudging him with his elbow, "now's your time! Sheer off! I'll cover your retreat. The time's a-flying. Bunsby! It's for liberty. Will you once?"

Bunsby was immovable.

"Bunsby!" whispered the Captain, "will you twice?"

Bunsby wouldn't twice.

“Bunsby!” urged the Captain, “it’s for liberty; will you three times? Now or never!”

Bunsby didn’t then, and didn’t ever; for Mrs. MacStinger immediately afterwards married him.

“**A**ND bear a hand and cheer up,” said the Captain, patting him on the back. “What! There’s more than one sweet creetur in the world!”

“Not to me, Captain Gills,” replied Mr. Toots gravely. “Not to me, I assure you. The state of my feelings towards Miss Dombey is of that unspeakable description, that my heart is a desert island, and she lives in it alone. I’m getting more used up every day, and I’m proud to be so. If you could see my legs when I take my boots off, you’d form some idea of what unrequited affection is. I have been prescribed bark, but I don’t take it, for I don’t wish to have any tone whatever given to my constitution. I’d rather not.”

IT sat down, with its eyes upon the empty fire-place, and as it lost itself in thought there shone into the room a gleam of light; a ray of sun. It was quite unmindful, and sat thinking. Suddenly it rose, with a terrible face, and that guilty hand grasping what was in its breast. Then it was arrested by a cry—a wild, loud, piercing, loving, rapturous cry—and he only saw his own reflection in the glass, and at his knees, his daughter!

Yes. His daughter! Look at her! Look here! Down upon the ground, clinging to him, calling to him, folding her hands, praying to him!

“Papa! Dearest papa! Pardon me, forgive me! I have come back to ask forgiveness on my knees. I never can be happy more, without it!”

Unchanged still. Of all the world, unchanged. Raising the same face to his, as on that miserable night. Asking *his* forgiveness!

“Dear papa, oh don’t look strangely on me ! I never meant to leave you. I never thought of it, before or afterwards. I was frightened when I went away, and could not think. Papa, dear, I am changed. I am penitent. I know my fault. I know my duty better now. Papa, don’t cast me off, or I shall die !”

He tottered to his chair. He felt her draw his arms about her neck ; he felt her put her own round his ; he felt her kisses on his face ; he felt her wet cheek laid against his own ; he felt—oh, how deeply !—all that he had done.

Upon the breast that he had bruised, against the heart that he had almost broken, she laid his face, now covered with his hands, and said, sobbing :

“Papa, love, I am a mother. I have a child who will soon call Walter by the name by which I call you. When it was born, and when I knew how much I loved it, I knew what I had done in leaving you. Forgive me, dear papa ! oh say God bless me, and my little child !”

He would have said it, if he could. He would have raised his hands and besought her for pardon, but she caught them in her own, and put them down, hurriedly.

“My little child was born at sea, papa. I prayed to God (and so did Walter for me) to spare me, that I might come home. The moment I could land, I came back to you. Never let us be parted any more, papa !”

His head, now gray, was encircled by her arm ; and he groaned to think that never, never, had it rested so before.

“You will come home with me, papa, and see my baby. A boy, papa. His name is Paul. I think—I hope—he’s like—”

Her tears stopped her.

“Dear papa, for the sake of my child, for the sake of the name we have given him, for my sake, pardon Walter. He is so kind and tender to me. I am so happy with him. It was not his fault that we were married. It was mine. I loved him so much.”

She clung closer to him, more endearing and more earnest.

“He is the darling of my heart, papa. I would die for him. He will love and honor you as I will. We will teach our little child to love and honor you; and we will tell him, when he can understand, that you had a son of that name once, and that he died, and you were very sorry; but that he has gone to heaven, where we all hope to see him when our time for resting comes. Kiss me, papa, as a promise that you will be reconciled to Walter—to my dearest husband—to the father of the little child who taught me to come back, papa. Who taught me to come back!”

As she clung closer to him, in another burst of tears, he kissed her on her lips, and, lifting up his eyes, said, “Oh my God, forgive me, for I need it very much!”

With that he dropped his head again, lamenting over and caressing her, and there was not a sound in all the house for a long, long time; they remaining clasped in one another’s arms, in the glorious sunshine that had crept in with Florence.

FROM OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

BUT, astounded as he was by the apparition of the dwarf among the Little Bethelites, and not free from a misgiving that it was the forerunner of some trouble or annoyance, he was compelled to subdue his wonder, and to take active measures for the withdrawal of his parent, as the evening was now creeping on, and the matter grew serious. Therefore, the next time little Jacob woke, Kit set himself to attract his wandering attention, and this not being a very difficult task (one sneeze effected it), he signed to him to rouse his mother.

Ill-luck would have it, however, that just then the preacher, in a forcible exposition of one head of his discourse, leaned over upon the pulpit-desk, so that very little more of him than his legs remained inside; and, while he made vehement gestures

with his right hand, and held on with his left, stared, or seemed to stare, straight into little Jacob's eyes, threatening him by his strained look and attitude—so it appeared to the child—that if he so much as moved a muscle, he, the preacher, would be literally, and not figuratively, “down upon him” that instant. In this fearful state of things, distracted by the sudden appearance of Kit, and fascinated by the eyes of the preacher, the miserable Jacob sat bolt-upright, wholly incapable of motion, strongly disposed to cry, but afraid to do so, and returning his pastor's gaze until his infant eyes seemed starting from their sockets.

“If I must do it openly, I must,” thought Kit. With that he walked softly out of his pew and into his mother's, and, as Mr. Swiveller would have observed, if he had been present, “collared” the baby without speaking a word.

“Hush, mother!” whispered Kit. “Come along with me, I've got something to tell you.”

“Where am I?” said Mrs. Nubbles.

“In this blessed Little Bethel,” returned her son, peevishly.

“Blessed indeed!” cried Mrs. Nubbles, catching at the word.

“Oh, Christopher! how have I been edified this night!”

“Yes, yes, I know,” said Kit, hastily; “but come along, mother; everybody's looking at us. Don't make a noise—bring Jacob—that's right!”

“Stay, Satan, stay!” cried the preacher, as Kit was moving off.

“The gentleman says you're to stay, Christopher,” whispered his mother.

“Stay, Satan, stay!” roared the preacher again. “Tempt not the woman that doth incline her ear to thee, but hearken to the voice of him that calleth. He hath a lamb from the fold!” cried the preacher, raising his voice still higher, and pointing to the baby. “He beareth off a lamb, a precious lamb! He goeth about, like a wolf in the night season, and inveigleth the tender lambs!”

Kit was the best-tempered fellow in the world, but considering this strong language, and being somewhat excited by the

circumstances in which he was placed, he faced round on the pulpit, with the baby in his arms, and replied aloud—

“No, I don’t. He’s my brother.”

“He’s *my* brother!” cried the preacher.

“He isn’t,” said Kit, indignantly. “How can you say such a thing? And don’t call me names, if you please; what harm have I done? I shouldn’t have come to take ’em away, unless I was obliged, you may depend upon that. I wanted to do it very quiet, but you wouldn’t let me. Now, you have the goodness to abuse Satan and them as much as you like, sir, and to let me alone, if you please.”

So saying, Kit marched out of the chapel, followed by his mother and little Jacob, and found himself in the open air, with an indistinct recollection of having seen the people wake up and look surprised, and of Quilp having remained, throughout the interruption, in his old attitude, without moving his eyes from the ceiling, or appearing to take the smallest notice of anything that passed.

“**W**ILL you answer me?” said Quilp. “What’s going on, above?”

“You won’t let one speak,” replied the boy. “They—ha, ha, ha!—they think you’re—you’re dead. Ha, ha, ha!”

“Dead!” cried Quilp, relaxing into a grim laugh himself.

“No. Do they? Do they really, you dog?”

“They think you’re—you’re drowned,” replied the boy, who in his malicious nature had a strong infusion of his master. “You was last seen on the brink of the wharf, and they think you tumbled over. Ha, ha!”

The prospect of playing the spy under such delicious circumstances, and of disappointing them all by walking in alive, gave moré delight to Quilp than the greatest stroke of good fortune could possibly have inspired him with. He was no less tickled than his hopeful assistant, and they both stood for some seconds, grinning and gasping and wagging their heads at each

other, on either side of the post, like an unmatchable pair of Chinese idols.

“Not a word,” said Quilp, making towards the door on tip-toe. “Not a sound, not so much as a creaking board, or a stumble against a cobweb. Drowned, eh, Mrs. Quilp! Drowned!”

So saying, he blew out the candle, kicked off his shoes, and groped his way upstairs; leaving his delighted young friend in an ecstasy of somersets on the pavement.

The bedroom door on the staircase being unlocked, Mr. Quilp slipped in, and planted himself behind the door of communication between that chamber and the sitting-room, which standing ajar to render both more airy, and having a very convenient chink (of which he had often availed himself for purposes of espial, and had indeed enlarged with his pocket-knife), enabled him not only to hear, but to see distinctly what was passing.

Applying his eye to this convenient place, he descried Mr. Brass seated at the table with pen, ink, and paper, and the case-bottle of rum—his own case-bottle, and his own particular Jamaica—convenient to his hand; with hot water, fragrant lemons, white lump sugar, and all things fitting; from which choice materials, Sampson, by no means insensible to their claims upon his attention, had compounded a mighty glass of punch reeking hot; which he was at that very moment stirring up with a teaspoon, and contemplating with looks in which a faint assumption of sentimental regret struggled but weakly with a bland and comfortable joy. At the same table, with both her elbows upon it, was Mrs. Jiniwin; no longer sipping other people’s punch feloniously with teaspoons, but taking deep draughts from a jorum of her own; while her daughter—not exactly with ashes on her head, or sackcloth on her back, but preserving a very decent and becoming appearance of sorrow nevertheless—was reclining in an easy chair, and soothing her grief with a smaller allowance of the same glib liquid. There were also present a couple of water-side men, bearing

between them certain machines called drags ; even these fellows were accommodated with a stiff glass apiece ; and as they drank with a great relish, and were naturally of a red-nosed, pimple-faced, convivial look, their presence rather increased than detracted from that decided appearance of comfort, which was the great characteristic of the party.

“If I could poison that dear old lady’s rum and water,” murmured Quilp, “I’d die happy.”

“Ah !” said Mr. Brass, breaking the silence, and raising his eyes to the ceiling with a sigh, “who knows but he may be looking down upon us now ! Who knows but what he may be surveying of us from—from somewheres or another, and contemplating us with a watchful eye ! Oh Lor !”

Here Mr. Brass stopped to drink half his punch, and then resumed ; looking at the other half, as he spoke, with a dejected smile.

“I can almost fancy,” said the lawyer, shaking his head, “that I see his eye glistening down at the very bottom of my liquor. When shall we look upon his like again ? Never, never ! One minute we are here”—holding his tumbler before his eyes—“the next we are there”—gulping down its contents, and striking himself emphatically a little below the chest—“in the silent tomb. To think that I should be drinking his very rum ! It seems like a dream.”

With the view, no doubt, of testing the reality of his position, Mr. Brass pushed his tumbler as he spoke towards Mrs. Jiniwin for the purpose of being replenished ; and turned towards the attendant mariners.

“The search has been quite unsuccessful, then ?”

“Quite, master. But I should say that if he turns up anywhere, he’ll come ashore somewhere about Grinidge to-morrow, at ebb-tide, eh, mate ?”

The other gentleman assented, observing that he was expected at the Hospital, and that several pensioners would be ready to receive him whenever he arrived.

“Then we have nothing for it but resignation,” said Mr.

Brass : "nothing but resignation, and expectation. It would be a comfort to have his body ; it would be a dreary comfort."

"Oh, beyond a doubt," assented Mrs. Jiniwin, hastily ; "if we once had that, we should be quite sure."

"With regard to the descriptive advertisement," said Sampson Brass, taking up his pen. "It is a melancholy pleasure to recall his traits. Respecting his legs now—?"

"Crooked, certainly," said Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Do you think they *were* crooked?" said Brass, in an insinuating tone. "I think I see them now coming up the street very wide apart, in nankeen pantaloons a little shrunk and without straps. Ah ! what a vale of tears we live in. Do we say crooked?"

"I think they were a little so," observed Mrs. Quilp with a sob.

"Legs crooked," said Brass, writing as he spoke. "Large head, short body, legs crooked—"

"Very crooked," suggested Mrs. Jiniwin.

"We'll not say very crooked, ma'am," said Brass piously. "Let us not bear hard upon the weaknesses of the deceased. He is gone, ma'am, to where his legs will never come in question.—We will content ourselves with crooked, Mrs. Jiniwin."

"I thought you wanted the truth," said the old lady. "That's all."

"Bless your eyes, how I love you," muttered Quilp. "There she goes again. Nothing but punch !"

"This is an occupation," said the lawyer, laying down his pen and emptying his glass, "which seems to bring him before my eyes like the Ghost of Hamlet's father, in the very clothes that he wore on work-a-days. His coat, his waistcoat, his shoes and stockings, his trousers, his hat, his wit and humor, his pathos and his umbrella, all come before me like visions of my youth. His linen !" said Mr. Brass smiling fondly at the wall, "his linen which was always of a particular color, for such was his whim and fancy—how plain I see his linen now !"

"You had better go on, sir," said Mrs. Jiniwin impatiently.

"True, ma'am, true," cried Mr. Brass. "Our faculties must not freeze with grief. I'll trouble you for a little more of that, ma'am. A question now arises, with relation to his nose."

"Flat," said Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Aquiline!" cried Quilp, thrusting in his head, and striking the feature with his fist, "Aquiline, you hag. Do you see it? Do you call that flat? Do you? Eh?"

"Oh, capital, capital!" shouted Brass, from the mere force of habit. "Excellent! How very good he is! He's a most remarkable man—so extremely whimsical! Such an amazing power of taking people by surprise!"

Quilp paid no regard whatever to these compliments, nor to the dubious and frightened look into which the lawyer gradually subsided, nor to the shrieks of his wife and mother-in-law, nor to the latter's running from the room, nor to the former's fainting away. Keeping his eye fixed on Sampson Brass, he walked up to the table, and beginning with his glass, drank off the contents, and went regularly round until he had emptied the other two, when he seized the case-bottle, and hugging it under his arm, surveyed him with a most extraordinary leer.

"Not yet, Sampson," said Quilp. "Not just yet!"

"Oh very good indeed!" cried Brass, recovering his spirits a little. "Ha, ha, ha! Oh exceedingly good! There's not another man alive who could carry it off like that. A most difficult position to carry off. But he has such a flow of good-humor, such an amazing flow!"

"Good-night," said the dwarf, nodding expressively.

"Good-night, sir, good-night," cried the lawyer, retreating backwards towards the door. "This is a joyful occasion indeed, extremely joyful. Ha, ha, ha! oh very rich, very rich indeed, remarkably so!"

Waiting until Mr. Brass's ejaculations died away in the distance (for he continued to pour them out all the way downstairs), Quilp advanced towards the two men, who yet lingered in a kind of stupid amazement.

“Have you been dragging the river all day, gentlemen?” said the dwarf, holding the door open with great politeness.

“And yesterday too, master.”

“Dear me, you’ve had a deal of trouble. Pray consider everything yours that you find upon the—upon the body. Good-night!”

The men looked at each other, but had evidently no inclination to argue the point just then, and shuffled out of the room. The speedy clearance effected, Quilp locked the doors; and still embracing the case-bottle with shrugged-up shoulders and folded arms, stood looking at his insensible wife like a dismounted nightmare.

HE awoke. With a sensation of most blissful rest, better than sleep itself, he began gradually to remember something of these sufferings, and to think what a long night it had been, and whether he had not been delirious twice or thrice. Happening, in the midst of these cogitations, to raise his hand, he was astonished to find how heavy it seemed, and yet how thin and light it really was. Still, he felt indifferent and happy; and having no curiosity to pursue the subject, remained in the same waking slumber until his attention was attracted by a cough. This made him doubt whether he had locked his door last night, and feeling a little surprised at having a companion in the room. Still, he lacked energy to follow up this train of thought; and unconsciously fell, in a luxury of repose, to staring at some green stripes on the bed furniture, and associating them strangely with patches of fresh turf, while the yellow ground between made gravel-walks, and so helped out a long perspective of trim gardens.

He was rambling in imagination on these terraces, and had quite lost himself among them indeed, when he heard the cough once more. The walls shrunk into stripes again at the sound, and raising himself a little in the bed, and holding the curtain open with one hand, he looked out.

The same room certainly, and still by candle-light ; but with what unbounded astonishment did he see all those bottles, and basins, and articles of linen airing by the fire, and such like furniture of a sick-chamber—all very clean and neat, but all quite different from anything he left there, when he went to bed ! The atmosphere, too, filled with a cool smell of herbs, and vinegar ; the floor newly sprinkled ; the—the what ? The Marchioness ?

Yes ; playing cribbage with herself at the table. There she sat, intent upon her game, coughing now and then in a subdued manner as if she feared to disturb him—shuffling the cards, cutting, dealing, playing, counting, pegging—going through all the mysteries of cribbage as if she had been in full practice from her cradle !

Mr. Swiveller contemplated these things for a short time, and suffering the curtain to fall into its former position, laid his head on the pillow again.

“ I’m dreaming,” thought Richard, “ that’s clear. When I went to bed, my hands were not made of egg-shells, and now I can almost see through ’em. If this is not a dream, I have woke up by mistake in an Arabian Night, instead of a London one. But I have no doubt I’m asleep. Not the least.”

Here the small servant had another cough.

“ Very remarkable !” thought Mr. Swiveller. “ I never dreamt such a real cough as that, before. I don’t know, indeed, that I ever dreamt either a cough or a sneeze. Perhaps it’s part of the philosophy of dreams that one never does. There’s another—and another—I say !—I’m dreaming rather fast !”

For the purpose of testing his real condition, Mr. Swiveller, after some reflection, pinched himself in the arm.

“ Queerer still !” he thought. “ I came to bed rather plump than otherwise, and now there’s nothing to lay hold of. I’ll take another survey.”

The result of this additional inspection was, to convince Mr. Swiveller that the objects by which he was surrounded were

real, and that he saw them, beyond all question, with his waking eyes.

“It’s an Arabian Night ; that’s what it is,” said Richard. “I’m in Damascus or Grand Cairo. The Marchioness is a Genie, and having had a wager with another Genie about who is the handsomest young man alive, and the worthiest to be the husband of the Princess of China, has brought me away, room and all, to compare us together. Perhaps,” said Mr. Swiveller, turning languidly round on his pillow, and looking on that side of his bed which was next the wall, “the Princess may be still—no, she’s gone.”

Not feeling quite satisfied with this explanation, as, even taking it to be the correct one, it still involved a little mystery and doubt, Mr. Swiveller raised the curtain again, determined to take the first favorable opportunity of addressing his companion. An occasion soon presented itself. The Marchioness dealt, turned up a knave, and omitted to take the usual advantage ; upon which Mr. Swiveller called out as loud as he could —“two for his heels !”

The Marchioness jumped up quickly, and clapped her hands. “Arabian Night, certainly,” thought Mr. Swiveller ; “they always clap their hands instead of ringing the bell. Now for the two thousand black slaves, with jars of jewels on their heads !”

It appeared, however, that she had only clapped her hands for joy ; as, directly afterwards she began to laugh, and then to cry ; declaring, not in choice Arabic but in familiar English, that she was “so glad, she didn’t know what to do.”

“Marchioness,” said Mr. Swiveller, thoughtfully, “be pleased to draw nearer. First of all, will you have the goodness to inform me where I shall find my voice ; and secondly, what has become of my flesh ?”

The Marchioness only shook her head mournfully, and cried again ; whereupon Mr. Swiveller (being very weak) felt his own eyes affected likewise.

“I begin to infer, from your manner, and these appearances,

Marchioness," said Richard after a pause, and smiling with a trembling lip, "that I have been ill."

"You just have!" replied the small servant, wiping her eyes. "And haven't you been a-talking nonsense!"

"Oh!" said Dick, "very ill, Marchioness, have I been?"

"Dead, all but," replied the small servant. "I never thought you'd get better. Thank Heaven you have!"

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

ONE Sunday night my mother reads to Peggotty and me in there, how Lazarus was raised up from the dead. And I am so frightened that they are afterwards obliged to take me out of bed, and show me the quiet churchyard out of the bedroom window, with the dead all lying in their graves at rest, below the solemn moon.

"MASTER DAVY," said Peggotty, untying her bonnet with a shaking hand, and speaking in a breathless sort of way, "what do you think? You have got a pa!"

I trembled, and turned white. Something—I don't know what, or how—connected with the grave in the churchyard, and the raising of the dead, seemed to strike me like an unwholesome wind.

"A new one," said Peggotty.

"A new one?" I repeated.

Peggotty gave a gasp, as if she were swallowing something that was very hard, and, putting out her hand, said:

"Come and see him."

"I don't want to see him."

EVEN when the lessons are done, the worst is yet to happen, in the shape of an appalling sum. This is invented for me, and delivered to me orally by Mr. Murdstone, and be-

gins: "If I go into a cheesemonger's shop, and buy five thousand double Gloucester cheeses at fourpence-halfpenny each, present payment"—at which I see Miss Murdstone secretly overjoyed. I pore over these cheeses without any result or enlightenment until dinner-time, when, having made a mulatto of myself by getting the dirt of the slate into the pores of my skin, I have a slice of bread to help me out with the cheeses, and am considered in disgrace for the rest of the evening.

ONE morning, when I went into the parlor with my books, I found my mother looking anxious, Miss Murdstone looking firm, and Mr. Murdstone binding something round the bottom of a cane—a lithe and limber cane, which he left off binding when I came in, and poised and switched in the air.

"I tell you, Clara," said Mr. Murdstone, "I have been often flogged myself."

"To be sure; of course," said Miss Murdstone.

"Certainly, my dear Jane," faltered my mother, meekly.

"But—but do you think it did Edward good?"

"Do you think it did Edward harm, Clara?" asked Mr. Murdstone, gravely.

"That's the point," said his sister.

To this my mother returned, "Certainly, my dear Jane," and said no more.

I felt apprehensive that I was personally interested in this dialogue, and sought Mr. Murdstone's eye as it lighted on mine.

"Now, David," he said—and I saw that cast again as he said it—"you must be far more careful to-day than usual." He gave the cane another poise, and another switch; and having finished his preparation of it, laid it down beside him, with an impressive look, and took up his book.

This was a good freshener to my presence of mind, as a beginning. I felt the words of my lessons slipping off, not one by one, or line by line, but by the entire page; I tried to lay

hold of them ; but they seemed, if I may so express it, to have put skates on, and to skim away from me with a smoothness there was no checking.

We began badly, and went on worse. I had come in with an idea of distinguishing myself rather, conceiving that I was very well prepared ; but it turned out to be quite a mistake. Book after book was added to the heap of failures, Miss Murdstone being firmly watchful of us all the time. And when we came at last to the five thousand cheeses (canes he made it that day, I remember), my mother burst out crying.

“Clara !” said Miss Murdstone, in her warning voice.

“I am not quite well, my dear Jane, I think,” said my mother.

I saw him wink, solemnly, at his sister, as he rose and said, taking up the cane :

“Why, Jane, we can hardly expect Clara to bear, with perfect firmness, the worry and torment that David has occasioned her to-day. That would be stoical. Clara is greatly strengthened and improved, but we can hardly expect so much from her. David, you and I will go upstairs, boy.”

As he took me out at the door, my mother ran towards us. Miss Murdstone said, “Clara ! are you a perfect fool ?” and interfered. I saw my mother stop her ears then, and I heard her crying.

He walked me up to my room slowly and gravely—I am certain he had a delight in that formal parade of executing justice—and when we got there, suddenly twisted my head under his arm.

“Mr. Murdstone ! Sir !” I cried to him. “Don’t ! Pray don’t beat me ! I have tried to learn, sir, but I can’t learn while you and Miss Murdstone are by. I can’t indeed !”

“Can’t you, indeed, David ?” he said. “We’ll try that.”

He had my head as in a vice, but I twined round him somehow, and stopped him for a moment, entreating him not to beat me. It was only for a moment that I stopped him, for he cut me heavily an instant afterwards, and in the same instant I

caught the hand with which he held me in my mouth, between my teeth, and bit it through. It sets my teeth on edge to think of it.

He beat me then, as if he would beat me to death. Above all the noise we made, I heard them running up the stairs, and crying out—I heard my mother crying out—and Peggotty. Then he was gone; and the door was locked outside; and I was lying, fevered and hot, and torn, and sore, and raging in my puny way, upon the floor.

MR. MELL having left me while he took his irreparable boots upstairs, I went softly to the upper end of the room, observing all this as I crept along. Suddenly I came upon a pasteboard placard, beautifully written, which was lying on the desk, and bore these words: "*Take care of him. He bites.*"

I got upon the desk immediately, apprehensive of at least a great dog underneath. But, though I looked all round with anxious eyes, I could see nothing of him. I was still engaged in peering about when Mr. Mell came back, and asked me what I did up there?

"I beg your pardon, sir," says I, "if you please, I'm looking for the dog."

"Dog?" says he. "What dog?"

"Isn't it a dog, sir?"

"Isn't what a dog?"

"That's to be taken care of, sir; that bites?"

"No, Copperfield," says he, gravely, "that's not a dog. That's a boy. My instructions are, Copperfield, to put this placard on your back; I am sorry to make such a beginning with you, but I must do it."

With that he took me down, and tied the placard, which was neatly constructed for the purpose, on my shoulders like a knapsack; and wherever I went afterwards, I had the consolation of carrying it.

“DO you recollect the date,” said Mr. Dick, looking earnestly at me, and taking up his pen to note it down, “when King Charles the First had his head cut off?”

I said I believed it happened in the year sixteen hundred and forty-nine.

“Well,” returned Mr. Dick, scratching his ear with his pen, and looking dubiously at me. “So the books say; but I don’t see how that can be. Because, if it was so long ago, how could the people about him have made that mistake of putting some of the trouble out of *his* head, after it was taken off, into *mine*?”

I was very much surprised by the inquiry, but could give no information on this point.

“It’s very strange,” said Mr. Dick, with a despondent look upon his papers, and with his hand among his hair again, “that I never can get that quite right. I never can make that perfectly clear. But no matter, no matter!” he said cheerfully, and rousing himself, “there’s time enough! My compliments to Miss Trotwood; I am getting on very well indeed.”

“TROTWOOD,” said Mr. Dick, with an air of mystery, after imparting this confidence to me, one Wednesday; “who’s the man that hides near our house and frightens her?”

“Frightens my aunt, sir?”

Mr. Dick nodded. “I thought nothing would have frightened her,” he said, “for she’s—” here he whispered softly, “don’t mention it—the wisest and most wonderful of women.” Having said which, he drew back, to observe the effect which this description of her made upon me.

“The first time he came,” said Mr. Dick, “was—let me see—sixteen hundred and forty-nine was the date of King Charles’s execution. I think you said sixteen hundred and forty-nine?”

“Yes, sir.”

"I don't know how it can be," said Mr. Dick, sorely puzzled and shaking his head. "I don't think I am as old at that."

"Was it in that year that the man appeared, sir?" I asked.

"Why, really," said Mr. Dick, "I don't see how it can have been in that year, Trotwood. Did you get that date out of history?"

"Yes, sir."

"I suppose history never lies, does it?" said Mr. Dick, with a gleam of hope.

"Oh dear, no, sir!" I replied, most decisively. I was ingenuous and young, and I thought so.

"I can't make it out," said Mr. Dick, shaking his head. "There's something wrong, somewhere. However, it was very soon after the mistake was made of putting some of the trouble out of King Charles's head into my head, that the man first came. I was walking out with Miss Trotwood after tea, just at dark, and there he was, close to our house."

"Walking about?" I inquired.

"Walking about?" repeated Mr. Dick. "Let me see. I must recollect a bit. N—no, no; he was not walking about."

I asked, as the shortest way to get at it, what he *was* doing.

"Well, he wasn't there at all," said Mr. Dick, "until he came up behind her, and whispered. Then she turned round and fainted, and I stood still and looked at him, and he walked away; but that he should have been hiding ever since (in the ground or somewhere), is the most extraordinary thing!"

THE shade of a young butcher rises, like the apparition of an armed head in Macbeth. Who is this young butcher? He is the terror of the youth of Canterbury. There is a vague belief abroad, that the beef suet with which he anoints his hair gives him unnatural strength, and that he is a match for a man. He is a broad-faced, bull-necked young butcher, with rough red cheeks, an ill-conditioned mind, and an injurious tongue. His main use of this tongue is, to disparage Dr. Strong's young

gentlemen. He says, publicly, that if they want anything he'll give it 'em. He names individuals among them (myself included), whom he could undertake to settle with one hand, and the other tied behind him. He waylays the smaller boys to punch their unprotected heads, and calls challenges after me in the open streets. For these sufficient reasons I resolve to fight the butcher.

It is a summer evening, down in a green hollow, at the corner of a wall. I meet the butcher by appointment. I am attended by a select body of our boys ; the butcher, by two other butchers, a young publican, and a sweep. The preliminaries are adjusted, and the butcher and myself stand face to face. In a moment the butcher lights ten thousand candles out of my left eyebrow. In another moment, I don't know where the wall is, or where I am, or where anybody is. I hardly know which is myself and which the butcher, we are always in such a tangle and tussle, knocking about the trodden grass. Sometimes I see the butcher, bloody but confident ; sometimes I see nothing, and sit gasping on my second's knee ; sometimes I go in at the butcher madly, and cut my knuckles open against his face, without appearing to discompose him at all. At last I awake, very queer about the head, as from a giddy sleep, and see the butcher walking off, congratulated by the two other butchers and the sweep and publican, and putting on his coat as he goes ; from which I augur, justly, that the victory is his.

“ **W**ELL, well !” she said, smiting her small knees, and rising, “ this is not business. Come, Steerforth, let's explore the polar regions, and have it over.”

She then selected two or three of the little instruments, and a little bottle, and asked (to my surprise) if the table would bear. On Steerforth's replying in the affirmative, she pushed a chair against it, and begging the assistance of my hand, mounted up, pretty nimbly, to the top, as if it were a stage.

"If either of you saw my ankles," she said, when she was safely elevated, "say so, and I'll go home and destroy myself."

"*I did not,*" said Steerforth.

"*I did not,*" said I.

"Well, then," cried Miss Mowcher, "I'll consent to live. Now, ducky, ducky, ducky, come to Mrs. Bond and be killed."

This was an invocation to Steerforth to place himself under her hands; who, accordingly, sat himself down, with his back to the table, and his laughing face towards me, and submitted his head to her inspection, evidently for no other purpose than our entertainment. To see Miss Mowcher standing over him, looking at his rich profusion of brown hair through a large round magnifying glass, which she took out of her pocket, was a most amazing spectacle.

SOMEBODY was leaning out of my bedroom window refreshing his forehead against the cool stone of the parapet, and feeling the air upon his face. It was myself. I was addressing myself as "*Copperfield,*" and saying, "Why did you try to smoke? You might have known you couldn't do it." Now, somebody was unsteadily contemplating his features in the looking-glass. That was I too. I was very pale in the looking-glass; my eyes had a vacant appearance; and my hair—only my hair, nothing else—looked drunk.

Somebody said to me, "Let us go to the theatre, *Copperfield!*" There was no bedroom before me, but again the jingling table covered with glasses; the lamp; Grainger on my right hand, Markham on my left, and Steerforth opposite—all sitting in a mist, and a long way off. The theatre! To be sure. The very thing. Come along! But they must excuse me if I saw everybody out first, and turned the lamp off—in case of fire.

Owing to some confusion in the dark, the door was gone. I was feeling for it in the window-curtains, when Steerforth, laughing, took me by the arm and led me out. We went

downstairs, one behind another. Near the bottom, somebody fell and rolled down. Somebody else said it was Copperfield. I was angry at that false report, until finding myself on my back in the passage, I began to think there might be some foundation for it.

A very foggy night, with great rings round the lamps in the streets! There was an indistinct talk of its being wet. I considered it frosty. Steerforth dusted me under a lamp-post, and put my hat into shape, which somebody produced from somewhere in a most extraordinary manner, for I hadn't had it on before. Steerforth then said, "You are all right, Copperfield, are you not?" and I told him, "Neverberrer."

A man, sitting in a pigeon-hole place, looked out of the fog, and took money from somebody, inquiring if I was one of the gentlemen paid for, and appearing rather doubtful (as I remember in the glimpse I had of him) whether to take the money for me or not. Shortly afterwards, we were very high up in a very hot theatre, looking down into a large pit, that seemed to me to smoke, the people with whom it was crammed were so indistinct. There was a great stage, too, looking very clean and smooth after the streets; and there were people upon it, talking about something or other, but not at all intelligibly. There was an abundance of bright lights, and there was music, and there were ladies down in the boxes, and I don't know what more. The whole building looked to me as if it were learning to swim; it conducted itself in such an unaccountable manner, when I tried to steady it.

On somebody's motion, we resolved to go downstairs to the dress-boxes, where the ladies were. A gentleman lounging, full-dressed, on a sofa, with an opera-glass in his hand, passed before my view, and also my own figure at full length in a glass. Then I was being ushered into one of these boxes, and found myself saying something as I sat down, and people about me crying "Silence!" to somebody, and ladies casting indignant glances at me, and—what! yes!—Agnes, sitting on the seat before me, in the same box, with a

lady and gentleman beside her, whom I didn't know. I see her face now better than I did then, I dare say, with its indelible look of regret and wonder turned upon me.

"Agnes!" I said thickly, "Lorblessmer! Agnes!"

"Hush! Pray!" she answered, I could not conceive why. "You disturb the company. Look at the stage!"

I tried, on her injunction, to fix it, and to hear something of what was going on there, but quite in vain. I looked at her again by and by, and saw her shrink into her corner, and put her gloved hand to her forehead.

"Agnes!" I said. "I'm afraid you're nor well."

"Yes, yes. Do not mind me, Trotwood," she returned. "Listen! Are you going away soon?"

"Amigo araway soo?" I repeated.

"Yes."

I had a stupid intention of replying that I was going to wait, to hand her downstairs. I suppose I expressed it somehow; for, after she had looked at me attentively for a little while, she appeared to understand, and replied in a low tone:

"I know you will do as I ask you, if I tell you I am very earnest in it. Go away now, Trotwood, for my sake, and ask your friends to take you home."

THE leg of mutton came up very red within, and very pale without: besides having a foreign substance of a gritty nature sprinkled over it, as if it had had a fall into the ashes of that remarkable kitchen fire-place. But we were not in a condition to judge of this fact from the appearance of the gravy, forasmuch as the "young gal" had dropped it all upon the stairs—where it remained, by the by, in a long train, until it was worn out. The pigeon-pie was not bad, but it was a delusive pie: the crust being like a disappointed head, phrenologically speaking: full of lumps and bumps, with nothing particular underneath. In short, the banquet was such a failure that I should have been quite unhappy—about the

failure, I mean, for I was always unhappy about Dora—if I had not been relieved by the great good-humor of my company, and by a bright suggestion from Mr. Micawber.

“**B**UT I haven’t got any strength at all,” said Dora, shaking her curls. “Have I, Jip? Oh, do kiss Jip, and be agreeable!”

It was impossible to resist kissing Jip, when she held him up to me for that purpose, putting her own bright, rosy little mouth into kissing form, as she directed the operation, which she insisted should be performed symmetrically, on the centre of his nose. I did as she bade me—rewarding myself afterwards for my obedience—and she charmed me out of my graver character for I don’t know how long.

FROM BLEAK HOUSE.

THE service being concluded, Sir Leicester gave his arm with much taste and gallantry to Lady Dedlock—though he was obliged to walk by the help of a thick stick—and escorted her out of church to the pony carriage in which they had come. The servants then dispersed, and so did the congregation; whom Sir Leicester had contemplated all along (Mr. Skimpole said to Mr. Boythorn’s infinite delight), as if he were a considerable landed proprietor in heaven.

“He believes he is!” said Mr. Boythorn. “He firmly believes it. So did his father, and his grandfather, and his great-grandfather!”

“Do you know,” pursued Mr. Skimpole, very unexpectedly to Mr. Boythorn, “it’s agreeable to me to see a man of that sort.”

“Is it!” said Mr. Boythorn.

“Say that he wants to patronize me,” pursued Mr. Skimpole. “Very well! I don’t object.”

"*I* do," said Mr. Boythorn, with great vigor.

"Do you really?" returned Mr. Skimpole, in his easy light vein. "But that's taking trouble, surely. And why should you take trouble? Here am I, content to receive things childish, as they fall out: and I never take trouble! I come down here, for instance, and I find a mighty potentate, exacting homage. Very well! I say 'Mighty potentate, here *is* my homage! It's easier to give it than to withhold it. Here it is. If you have anything of an agreeable nature to show me, I shall be happy to see it; if you have anything of an agreeable nature to give me, I shall be happy to accept it.' Mighty potentate replies in effect, 'This is a sensible fellow. I find him accord with my digestion and my bilious system. He doesn't impose upon me the necessity of rolling myself up like a hedgehog with my points outward. I expand, I open, I turn my silver lining outward like Milton's cloud, and it's more agreeable to both of us.' That's my view of such things: speaking as a child!"

"But suppose you went down somewhere else to-morrow," said Mr. Boythorn, "where there was the opposite of that fellow—or of this fellow—how then?"

"How then?" said Mr. Skimpole, with an appearance of the utmost simplicity and candor. "Just the same then! I should say, 'My esteemed Boythorn'—to make you the personification of our imaginary friend—'my esteemed Boythorn, you object to the mighty potentate? Very good. So do I. I take it that my business in the social system is to be agreeable. I take it that everybody's business in the social system is to be agreeable. It's a system of harmony, in short. Therefore if you object, I object. Now, excellent Boythorn, let us go to dinner!'"

"But excellent Boythorn might say," returned our host, swelling and growing very red, "I'll be—"

"I understand," said Mr. Skimpole. "Very likely he would."

"—if I *will* go to dinner!" cried Mr. Boythorn, in a violent

burst, and stopping to strike his stick upon the ground. "And he would probably add, 'Is there such a thing as principle, Mr. Harold Skimpole?'"

"To which Harold Skimpole would reply, you know," he returned in his gayest manner, and with his most ingenuous smile, "Upon my life I have not the least idea! I don't know what it is you call by that name, or where it is, or who possesses it. If you possess it, and find it comfortable, I am quite delighted, and congratulate you heartily. But I know nothing about it, I assure you, for I am a mere child, and I lay no claim to it, and I don't want it!' So you see, excellent Boythorn and I would go to dinner after all!"

"MY dear father, may I beg you to prepare your mind for what I am going to say!"

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the model, pale and aghast, as Prince and Caddy, hand in hand, bent down before him. "What is this? Is this lunacy! Or what is this?"

"Father," returned Prince, with great submission, "I love this young lady, and we are engaged."

"Engaged!" cried Mr. Turveydrop, reclining on the sofa, and shutting out the sight with his hand. "An arrow launched at my brain, by my own child!"

"We have been engaged for some time, father," faltered Prince; "and Miss Summerson, hearing of it, advised that we should declare the fact to you, and was so very kind as to attend on the present occasion. Miss Jellyby is a young lady who deeply respects you, father."

Mr. Turveydrop uttered a groan.

"No, pray don't. Pray don't, father," urged his son. "Miss Jellyby is a young lady who deeply respects you, and our first desire is to consider your comfort."

Mr. Turveydrop sobbed.

"No, pray don't, father!" cried his son.

"Boy," said Mr. Turveydrop, "it is well that your sainted

mother is spared this pang. Strike deep, and spare not. Strike home, sir, strike home !”

“Pray, don’t say so, father,” implored Prince, in tears. “It goes to my heart, I do assure you, father, that our first wish and intention is to consider your comfort. Caroline and I do not forget our duty—what is my duty is Caroline’s, as we have often said together—and, with your approval and consent, father, we will devote ourselves to making your life agreeable.”

“Strike home,” murmured Mr. Turveydrop. “Strike home !”

But he seemed to listen, I thought, too.

“My dear father,” returned Prince, “we well know what little comforts you are accustomed to, and have a right to ; and it will always be our study and our pride to provide those before anything. If you will bless us with your approval and consent, father, we shall not think of being married until it is quite agreeable to you ; and when we *are* married, we shall always make you—of course—our first consideration. You must ever be the Head and Master here, father ; and we feel how truly unnatural it would be in us, if we failed to know it, or if we failed to exert ourselves in every possible way to please you.”

Mr. Turveydrop underwent a severe internal struggle, and came upright on the sofa again, with his cheeks puffing over his stiff cravat ; a perfect model of parental deportment.

“My son !” said Mr. Turveydrop. “My children ! I cannot resist your prayer. Be happy !”

His benignity, as he raised his future daughter-in-law and stretched out his hand to his son (who kissed it with affectionate respect and gratitude), was the most confusing sight I ever saw.

“My children,” said Mr. Turveydrop, paternally encircling Caddy with his left arm as she sat beside him, and putting his right hand gracefully on his hip. “My son and daughter, your happiness shall be my care. I will watch over you. You shall always live with me ;” meaning, of course, I will always

live with you ; “this house is henceforth as much yours as mine ; consider it your home. May you long live to share it with me !”

The power of his deportment was such, that they really were as much overcome with thankfulness as if, instead of quartering himself upon them for the rest of his life, he were making some munificent sacrifice in their favor.

“For myself, my children,” said Mr. Turveydrop, “I am falling into the sear and yellow leaf, and it is impossible to say how long the last feeble traces of gentlemanly deportment may linger in this weaving and spinning age. But, so long, I will do my duty to society, and will show myself, as usual, about town. My wants are few and simple. My little apartment here, my few essentials for the toilet, my frugal morning meal, and my little dinner, will suffice. I charge your dutiful affection with the supply of these requirements, and I charge myself with all the rest.”

They were overpowered afresh by his uncommon generosity.

THINKING that the display of Caddy’s wardrobe would be the best means of approaching the subject, I invited Mrs. Jellyby to come and look at it spread out on Caddy’s bed, in the evening after the unwholesome boy was gone.

“My dear Miss Summerson,” said she, rising from her desk, with her usual sweetness of temper, “these are really ridiculous preparations, though your assisting them is a proof of your kindness. There is something so inexpressibly absurd to me, in the idea of Caddy being married ! O Caddy, you silly, silly, silly puss !”

She came upstairs with us notwithstanding, and looked at the clothes in her customary far-off manner. They suggested one distinct idea to her ; for she said with her placid smile, and shaking her head, “My good Miss Summerson, at half the cost, this weak child might have been equipped for Africa !”

MR. GUPPY saw us to the door with the air of one who was either imperfectly awake or walking in his sleep ; and we left him there, staring.

But in a minute he came after us down the street without any hat, and with his long hair all blown about, and stopped us, saying fervently :

“ Miss Summerson, upon my honor and soul, you may depend upon me ! ”

“ I do,” said I, “ quite confidently.”

“ I beg your pardon, miss,” said Mr. Guppy, going with one leg and staying with the other, “ but this lady being present—your own witness—it might be a satisfaction to your mind (which I should wish to set at rest) if you were to repeat those admissions.”

“ Well, Caddy,” said I, turning to her, “ perhaps you will not be surprised when I tell you, my dear, that there never has been any engagement— ”

“ No proposal or promise of marriage whatsoever,” suggested Mr. Guppy.

“ No proposal or promise of marriage whatsoever,” said I, “ between this gentleman— ”

“ William Guppy, of Penton Place, Pentonville, in the county of Middlesex,” he murmured.

“ Between this gentleman, Mr. William Guppy, of Penton Place, Pentonville, in the county of Middlesex, and myself.”

“ Thank you, miss,” said Mr. Guppy. “ Very full—er—excuse me—lady’s name, Christian and surname both ? ”

I gave them.

“ Married woman, I believe ? ” said Mr. Guppy. “ Married woman. Thank you. Formerly Caroline Jellyby, spinster, then of Thavies Inn, within the city of London, but extra parochial ; now of Newton Street, Oxford Street. Much obliged.”

He ran home and came running back again.

“ Touching that matter, you know, I really and truly am very sorry that my arrangements in life, combined with circumstances over which I have no control, should prevent a renewal

of what was wholly terminated some time back," said Mr. Guppy to me, forlornly and despondently, "but it couldn't be. Now *could* it, you know? I only put it to you."

I replied it certainly could not. The subject did not admit of a doubt. He thanked me, and ran to his mother's again—and back again.

"It's very honorable of you, miss, I am sure," said Mr. Guppy. "If an altar could be erected in the bowers of friendship—but, upon my soul, you may rely upon me in every respect, save and except the tender passion only!"

The struggle in Mr. Guppy's breast, and the numerous oscillations it occasioned him between his mother's door and us, were sufficiently conspicuous in the windy street (particularly as his hair wanted cutting), to make us hurry away. I did so with a lightened heart; but when we last looked back, Mr. Guppy was still oscillating in the same troubled state of mind.

"**D**ON'T be frightened!" said Mr. Guppy, looking in at the coach-window. "One of the young Jellybys been and got his head through the area railings!"

"O poor child," said I, "let me out, if you please!"

"Pray be careful of yourself, miss. The young Jellybys are always up to something," said Mr. Guppy.

I made my way to the poor child, who was one of the dirtiest little unfortunates I ever saw, and found him very hot and frightened, and crying loudly, fixed by the neck between two iron railings, while a milkman and a beadle, with the kindest intentions possible, were endeavoring to drag him back by the legs, under a general impression that his skull was compressible by those means. As I found (after pacifying him), that he was a little boy, with a naturally large head, I thought that, perhaps, where his head could go, his body could follow, and mentioned that the best mode of extrication might be to push him forward. This was so favorably received by the milkman and beadle, that he would immediately have been pushed into

the area, if I had not held his pinafore, while Richard and Mr. Guppy ran down through the kitchen, to catch him when he should be released. At last he was happily got down without any accident, and then he began to beat Mr. Guppy with a hoop-stick in quite a frantic manner.

FROM LITTLE DORRIT.

THE doctor's friend was in the positive degree of hoarseness, puffiness, red-facedness, all-fours, tobacco, dirt, and brandy ; the doctor in the comparative—hoarser, puffier, more red-faced, more all-four, tobaccoer, dirtier, and brandier. The doctor was amazingly shabby, in a torn and darned rough-weather sea-jacket, out at elbows, and eminently short of buttons (he had been in his time the experienced surgeon carried by a passenger ship), the dirtiest white trousers conceivable by mortal man, carpet slippers, and no visible linen. "Childbed?" said the doctor. "I'm the boy!" With that the doctor took a comb from the chimney-piece, and stuck his hair upright—which appeared to be his way of washing himself—produced a professional chest or case, of most abject appearance, from the cupboard where his cup and saucer and coals were, settled his chin in the frowzy wrapper round his neck, and became a ghastly medical scarecrow.

The doctor and the debtor ran downstairs, leaving the turnkey to return to the lock, and made for the debtor's room. All the ladies in the prison had got hold of the news, and were in the yard. Some of them had already taken possession of the two children, and were hospitably carrying them off ; others were offering loans of little comforts from their own scanty store ; others were sympathizing with the greatest volubility. The gentlemen prisoners, feeling themselves at a disadvantage, had for the most part retired, not to say sneaked, to their

rooms ; from the open windows of which, some of them now complimented the doctor with whistles as he passed below, while others, with several stories between them, interchanged sarcastic references to the prevalent excitement.

“ **I** BEG your pardon. How shall I find out ? ”

“ Why, you’ll—you’ll ask till they tell you. Then you’ll memorialize that Department (according to regular forms which you’ll find out), for leave to memorialize this Department. If you get it (which you may after a time), that memorial must be entered in that Department, sent to be registered in this Department, sent back to be signed by that Department, sent back to be countersigned by this Department, and then it will begin to be regularly before that Department. You’ll find out when the business passes through each of these stages, by asking at both Departments till they tell you.”

“ But surely this is not the way to do the business,” Arthur Clennam could not help saying.

This airy young Barnacle was quite entertained by his simplicity in supposing for a moment that it was. This light in hand young Barnacle knew perfectly that it was not. This touch-and-go young Barnacle had “ got up ” the Department in a private secretaryship, that he might be ready for any little bit of fat that came to hand ; and he fully understood the Department to be a politico-diplomatico hocus-pocus piece of machinery, for the assistance of the nobs in keeping off the snobs. The dashing young Barnacle, in a word, was likely to become a statesman, and to make a figure.

“ When the business is regularly before that Department, whatever it is,” pursued this bright young Barnacle, “ then you can watch it from time to time through that Department. When it comes regularly before this Department, then you must watch it from time to time through this Department. We shall have to refer it right and left ; and when we refer it anywhere, then you’ll have to look it up. When it comes back to

us at any time, then you had better look *us* up. When it sticks anywhere, you'll have to try to give it a jog. When you write to another Department about it, and then to this Department about it, and don't hear anything satisfactory about it, why, then you had better—keep on writing."

"ROMANCE, however," Flora went on, busily arranging Mr. F.'s aunt's toast, "as I openly said to Mr. F. when he proposed to me and you will be surprised to hear that he proposed seven times once in a hackney-coach once in a boat once in a pew once on a donkey at Tunbridge Wells and the rest on his knees, Romance was fled with the early days of Arthur Clennam, our parents tore us asunder we became marble and stern reality usurped the throne, Mr F. said very much to his credit that he was perfectly aware of it and even preferred that state of things accordingly the word was spoken the fiat went forth and such is life you see my dear and yet we do not break but bend, pray make a good breakfast while I go in with the tray."

She disappeared, leaving Little Dorrit to ponder over the meaning of her scattered words. She soon came back again; and at last began to take her own breakfast, talking all the while.

UNWILLING, even under this discomfiture, to resign the ingrate and leave her hopeless, in case of her better dispositions obtaining the mastery over the darker side of her character, Mr. Meagles, for six successive days, published a discreetly covert advertisement in the morning papers, to the effect that if a certain young person who had lately left home without reflection, would at any time apply at his address at Twickenham, everything would be as it had been before, and no reproaches need be apprehended. The unexpected consequences of this notification, suggested to the dismayed Mr. Meagles for the first time that some hundreds of young persons must be leaving their homes without reflection, every day; for shoals of wrong young people came down to Twickenham, who, not finding

themselves received with enthusiasm, generally demanded compensation by way of damages, in addition to coach-hire there and back. Nor were these the only uninvited clients whom the advertisement produced. The swarm of begging letter-writers who would seem to be always watching eagerly for any hook, however small, to hang a letter upon, wrote to say that having seen the advertisement, they were induced to apply with confidence for various sums, ranging from ten shillings to fifty pounds: not because they knew anything about the young person, but because they felt that to part with those donations would greatly relieve the advertiser's mind. Several projectors, likewise, availed themselves of the same opportunity to correspond with Mr. Meagles; as, for example, to apprise him that their attention having been called to the advertisement by a friend, they begged to state that if they should ever hear anything of the young person, they would not fail to make it known to him immediately, and that in the meantime if he would oblige them with the funds necessary for bringing to perfection a certain entirely novel description of Pump, the happiest results would ensue to mankind.

WITH those words and a parting glance, Flora bustled out, leaving Clennam under dreadful apprehensions of his terrible charge.

The first variation which manifested itself in Mr. F.'s aunt's demeanor when she had finished her piece of toast, was a loud and prolonged sniff. Finding it impossible to avoid construing this demonstration into a defiance of himself, its gloomy significance being unmistakable, Clennam looked plaintively at the excellent though prejudiced lady from whom it emanated, in the hope that she might be disarmed by a meek submission.

"None of your eyes at me," said Mr. F.'s aunt, shivering with hostility. "Take that."

"That" was the crust of the piece of toast. Clennam accepted the boon with a look of gratitude, and held it in his

hand under the pressure of a little embarrassment, which was not relieved when Mr. F.'s aunt, elevating her voice into a cry of considerable power, exclaimed, "He has a proud stomach, this chap! He's too proud a chap to eat it!" and coming out of her chair, shook her venerable fist so very close to his nose as to tickle the surface. But for the timely return of Flora, to find him in this difficult situation, further consequences might have ensued. Flora, without the least discomposure or surprise, but congratulating the old lady in an approving manner on being "very lively to-night," handed her back to her chair.

"He has a proud stomach, this chap," said Mr. F.'s relation, on being reseated. "Give him a meal of chaff!"

"**S**UCH an inconvenient staircase, and so many corner-stairs, Arthur," whispered Flora, "would you object to putting your arm round me under my pelerine?"

With a sense of going downstairs in a highly ridiculous manner, Clennam descended in the required attitude, and only released his fair burden at the dining-room door; indeed, even there she was rather difficult to get rid of, remaining in his embrace to murmur, "Arthur, for mercy's sake don't breath it to papa!"

SO the Bride had mounted into her handsome chariot, incidentally accompanied by the Bridegroom; and after rolling for a few minutes smoothly over a fair pavement, had begun to jolt through a Slough of Despond, and through a long, long avenue of wrack and ruin. Other nuptial carriages are said to have gone the same road, before and since.

"**N**EVER to part, my dearest Arthur; never any more until the last! I never was rich before, I never was proud before, I never was happy before. I am rich in being taken

by you, I am proud in having been resigned by you, I am happy in being with you in this prison, as I should be happy in coming back to it with you, if it should be the will of God, and comforting and serving you with all my love and truth. I am yours anywhere, everywhere ! I love you dearly ! I would rather pass my life here with you, and go out daily, working for our bread, than I would have the greatest fortune that ever was told, and be the greatest lady that ever was honored. O, if poor papa may only know how blest at last my heart is, in this room where he suffered for so many years !”

WITH the aid of its contents, a newspaper, and some skimming of the cream of the pie-stock, Flora got through the remainder of the day in perfect good-humor ; though occasionally embarrassed by the consequences of an idle rumor which circulated among the credulous infants of the neighborhood, to the effect that an old lady had sold herself to the pie-shop, to be made up, and was then sitting in the pie-shop parlor, declining to complete her contract. This attracted so many young persons of both sexes, and, when the shades of evening began to fall, occasioned so much interruption to the business, that the merchant became very pressing in his proposals that Mr. F.’s aunt should be removed. A conveyance was accordingly brought to the door, which, by the joint efforts of the merchant and Flora, this remarkable woman was at last induced to enter ; though not without even then putting her head out of the window, and demanding to have him “brought for’ard” for the purpose originally mentioned. As she was observed at this time to direct baleful glances towards the Marshalsea, it has been supposed that this admirably consistent female intended by “him,” Arthur Clennam. This, however, is mere speculation ; who the person was, who, for the satisfaction of Mr. F.’s aunt’s mind, ought to have been brought forward and never was brought forward, will never be positively known.

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

THEY were not very serious in their nature ; being limited to abrasions on what the eldest Miss Pecksniff called “ the knobby parts ” of her parent’s anatomy, such as his knees and elbows, and to the development of an entirely new organ, unknown to phrenologists, on the back of his head. These injuries having been comforted externally, with patches of pickled brown paper, and Mr. Pecksniff having been comforted internally, with some stiff brandy-and-water, the eldest Miss Pecksniff sat down to make the tea, which was all ready.

IT happened on the fourth evening, that Mr. Pecksniff walking, as usual, into the bar of the Dragon, and finding no Mrs. Lupin there, went straight upstairs : purposing, in the fervor of his affectionate zeal, to apply his ear once more to the key-hole, and quiet his mind by assuring himself that the hard-hearted patient was going on well. It happened that Mr. Pecksniff, coming softly upon the dark passage into which a spiral ray of light usually darted through the same key-hole, was astonished to find no such ray visible ; and it happened that Mr. Pecksniff, when he had felt his way to the chamber-door, stooping hurriedly down to ascertain by personal inspection whether the jealousy of the old man had caused this key-hole to be stopped on the inside, brought his head into such violent contact with another head, that he could not help uttering, in an audible voice, the monosyllable “ Oh ! ” which was, as it were, sharply unscrewed and jerked out of him by very anguish. It happened then, and lastly, that Mr. Pecksniff found himself immediately collared by something which smelt like several damp umbrellas, a barrel of beer, a cask of warm brandy-and-water, and a small parlor-full of stale tobacco smoke mixed ; and was straightway led downstairs into the bar from which he had lately come, where he found himself standing opposite to, and in the grasp of a per-

fectly strange gentleman of still stranger appearance, who, with his disengaged hand, rubbed his own head very hard, and looked at him, Pecksniff, with an evil countenance.

JINKINS and Gander took the rest upon themselves, and made him as comfortable as they could, on the outside of his bed ; and when he seemed disposed to sleep, they left him. But before they had all gained the bottom of the staircase, a vision of Mr. Pecksniff, strangely attired, was seen to flutter on the top landing. He desired to collect their sentiments, it seemed, upon the nature of human life.

“My friends,” cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking over the banisters, “let us improve our minds by mutual inquiry and discussion. Let us be moral. Let us contemplate existence. Where is Jenkins ?”

“Here,” cried that gentleman. “Go to bed again !”

“To bed !” said Mr. Pecksniff. “Bed ! ’Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain, you have woke me too soon, I must slumber again.’ If any young orphan will repeat the remainder of that simple piece from Doctor Watts’s collection, an eligible opportunity now offers.”

Nobody volunteered.

“This is very soothing,” said Mr. Pecksniff, after a pause. “Extremely so. Cool and refreshing ; particularly to the legs ! The legs of the human subject, my friends, are a beautiful production. Compare them with wooden legs, and observe the difference between the anatomy of nature and the anatomy of art. Do you know,” said Mr. Pecksniff, leaning over the banisters, with an odd recollection of his familiar manner among new pupils at home, “that I should very much like to see Mrs. Todgers’s notion of a wooden leg, if perfectly agreeable to herself !”

As it appeared impossible to entertain any reasonable hopes of him after this speech, Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Gander went upstairs again, and once more got him into bed. But they

had not descended to the second floor before he was out again ; nor, when they had repeated the process, had they descended the first flight, before he was out again. In a word, as often as he was shut up in his own room, he darted out afresh, charged with some new moral sentiment, which he continually repeated over the banisters, with extraordinary relish, and an irrepressible desire for the improvement of his fellow-creatures that nothing could subdue.

AMONG these sleeping voyagers were Martin, and Mark Tapley, who, rocked into a heavy drowsiness by the unaccustomed motion, were as insensible to the foul air in which they lay, as to the uproar without. It was broad day when the latter awoke with a dim idea that he was dreaming of having gone to sleep in a four-post bedstead which had turned bottom upwards in the course of the night. There was more reason in this too, than in the roasting of eggs ; for the first objects Mr. Tapley recognized, when he opened his eyes, were his own heels—looking down to him, as he afterwards observed, from a nearly perpendicular elevation.

“Well,” said Mark, getting himself into a sitting posture, after various ineffectual struggles with the rolling of the ship. “This is the first time as ever I stood on my head all night.”

“You shouldn’t go to sleep upon the ground with your head to leeward, then,” growled a man in one of the berths.

“With my head to *where* ?” asked Mark.

The man repeated his previous sentiment.

“No, I won’t, another time,” said Mark, “when I know whereabouts on the map that country is. In the meanwhile I can give you a better piece of advice : don’t you nor any other friend of mine never go to sleep with his head in a ship any more.”

The man gave a grunt of discontented acquiescence, turned over in his berth, and drew his blanket over his head.

“—For,” said Mr. Tapley, pursuing the theme, by way of so-

liloquy, in a low tone of voice : the sea is as nonsensical a thing as any going. It never knows what to do with itself. It hasn't got no employment for its mind, and is always in a state of vacancy. Like them Polar bears in the wild-beast shows as is constantly a-nodding their heads from side to side, it never *can* be quiet. Which is entirely owing to its uncommon stupidity."

"**I** A'MOST forgot the piller, I declare !" said Mrs. Gamp, drawing it away. "There ! Now he's comfortable as he can be, *I'm* sure ! I must try to make myself so much so as I can."

With this view, she went about the construction of an extemporaneous bed in the easy-chair, with the addition of the next easy one for her feet. Having formed the best couch that the circumstances admitted of, she took out of her bundle a yellow nightcap of prodigious size, in shape resembling a cabbage ; which article of dress she fixed and tied on with the utmost care, previously divesting herself of a row of bald old curls that could scarcely be called false, they were so very innocent of anything approaching to deception. From the same repository she brought forth a night-jacket, in which she also attired herself. Finally she produced a watchman's coat, which she tied around her neck by the sleeves, so that she became two people ; and looked behind as if she were in the act of being embraced by one of the old patrol.

ON the seventh night of cribbage, when Mrs. Todgers sitting by proposed that instead of gambling they should play for "love," Mr. Moddle was seen to change color. On the fourteenth night he kissed Miss Pecksniff's snuffers, in the passage, when she went upstairs to bed ; meaning to have kissed her hand, but missing it.

"**I** AM glad we met. I am very glad we met. I am able now to ease my bosom of a heavy load, and speak to you in confidence. Mary," said Mr. Pecksniff in his tender-

est tones : indeed, they were so very tender that he almost squeaked : “ My soul ! I love you ! ”

A fantastic thing, that maiden affectation ! She made believe to shudder.

“ I love you,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “ my gentle life, with a devotion which is quite surprising, even to myself. I did suppose that the sensation was buried in the silent tomb of a lady, only second to you in qualities of the mind and form : but I find I am mistaken.”

She tried to disengage her hand, but might as well have tried to free herself from the embrace of an affectionate boa-constrictor : if anything so wily may be brought into comparison with Pecksniff.

“ **M**Y dear Miss Pécksniff, you may depend upon it,” said Mrs. Todgers, “ that he is burning to propose.”

“ My goodness me, why don't he then ? ” cried Cherry.

“ Men are so much more timid than we think 'em, my dear,” returned Mrs. Todgers. “ They balk themselves continually. I saw the words on Todgers's lips for months and months and months, before he said 'em.”

Miss Pecksniff submitted that Todgers might not have been a fair specimen.

“ Oh yes he was. Oh bless you, yes my dear. I was very particular in those days, I assure you,” said Mrs. Todgers, bridling. “ No, no. You give Mr. Moddle a little encouragement, Miss Pecksniff, if you wish him to speak ; and he'll speak fast enough, depend upon it.”

“ I am sure I don't know what encouragement he would have, Mrs. Todgers,” returned Charity. “ He walks with me, and plays cards with me, and he comes and sits along with me.”

“ Quite right,” said Mrs. Todgers. “ That's indispensable, my dear.”

“ And he sits very close to me.”

“Also quite correct,” said Mrs. Todgers.

“And he looks at me.”

“To be sure he does,” said Mrs. Todgers.

“And he has his arm upon the back of the chair or sofa, or whatever it is—behind me, you know.”

“I should think so,” said Mrs. Todgers.

“And then he begins to cry!”

Mrs. Todgers admitted that he might do better than that ; and might undoubtedly profit by the recollection of the great Lord Nelson’s signal at the battle of Trafalgar. Still, she said, he would come round; or, not to mince the matter, would be brought round, if Miss Pecksniff took up a decided position, and plainly showed him that it must be done.

Determining to regulate her conduct by this opinion, the young lady received Mr. Moddle, on the earliest subsequent occasion, with an air of constraint ; and gradually leading him to inquire, in a dejected manner, why she was so changed, confessed to him that she felt it necessary for their mutual peace and happiness to take a decided step. They had been much together lately, she observed, much together, and had tasted the sweets of a genuine reciprocity of sentiment. She never could forget him, nor could she ever cease to think of him with feelings of the liveliest friendship ; but people had begun to talk, the thing had been observed, and it was necessary that they should be nothing more to each other than any gentleman and lady in society usually are. She was glad she had had the resolution to say thus much before her feelings had been tried too far ; they had been greatly tried, she would admit ; but though she was weak and silly, she would soon get the better of it, she hoped.

Moddle, who had by this time become in the last degree maudlin, and wept abundantly, inferred from the foregoing avowal, that it was his mission to communicate to others the blight which had fallen on himself ; and that, being a kind of unintentional Vampire, he had had Miss Pecksniff assigned to him by the Fates, as Victim Number One. Miss Pecksniff

controverting this opinion as sinful, Moddle was goaded on to ask whether she could be contented with a blighted heart ; and it appearing on further examination that she could be, plighted his dismal troth, which was accepted and returned.

He bore his good fortune with the utmost moderation. Instead of being triumphant, he shed more tears than he had ever been known to shed before : and, sobbing, said :

“Oh ! what a day this has been ! I can’t go back to the office this afternoon. Oh, what a trying day this has been, Good Gracious !”

“**A**ND don’t go a-dropping none of your snuff in it,” said Mrs. Prig. “In gruel, barley-water, apple-tea, mutton-broth, and that, it don’t signify. It stimulates a patient. But I don’t relish it myself.”

“Why, Betsey Prig !” cried Mrs. Gamp, “how *can* you talk so !”

“Why, ain’t your patients, wotever their diseases is, always a-sneezin’ their wery heads off, along of your snuff ?” said Mrs. Prig.

“And wot if they are !” said Mrs. Gamp.

“Nothing if they are,” said Mrs. Prig. “But don’t deny it, Sairah.”

“Who deniges of it ?” Mrs. Gamp inquired.

Mrs. Prig returned no answer.

“Who deniges of it, Betsey ?” Mrs. Gamp inquired again. Then Mrs. Gamp, by reversing the question, imparted a deeper and more awful character of solemnity to the same. “Betsey, who deniges of it ?”

It was the nearest possible approach to a very decided difference of opinion between these ladies ; but Mrs. Prig’s impatience for the meal being greater at the moment than her impatience of contradiction, she replied, for the present, “Nobody, if you don’t, Sairah,” and prepared herself for tea. For a quarrel can be taken up at any time, but a limited quantity of salmon cannot.

“**I** HAVE been struck this day,” said Mr. Pecksniff, “with a walking-stick (which I have every reason to believe has knobs upon it), on that delicate and exquisite portion of the human anatomy, the brain. Several blows have been inflicted, sir, without a walking-stick, upon that tenderer portion of my frame—my heart. You have mentioned, sir, my being bankrupt in my purse. Yes, sir, I am. By an unfortunate speculation, combined with treachery, I find myself reduced to poverty; at a time, sir, when the child of my bosom is widowed, and affliction and disgrace are in my family.”

Here Mr. Pecksniff wiped his eyes again, and gave himself two or three little knocks upon the breast, as if he were answering two or three other little knocks from within, given by the tinkling hammer of his conscience, to express “Cheer up, my boy!”

“**Y**OU may depend upon it, my dear sir, that if you don’t make a point of taking lunch, you’ll very soon come under my hands. Allow me to illustrate this. In Mr. Crimble’s leg—”

The resident Director gave an involuntary start, for the doctor, in the heat of his demonstration, caught it up and laid it across his own, as if he were going to take it off, then and there.

“In Mr. Crimble’s leg, you’ll observe,” pursued the doctor, turning back his cuffs and spanning the limb with both hands, “where Mr. Crimble’s knee fits into the socket here, there is—that is to say, between the bone and the socket—a certain quantity of animal oil.”

“What do you pick *my* leg out for?” said Mr. Crimble, looking with something of an anxious expression at his limb. “It’s the same with other legs, ain’t it?”

“Never you mind, my good sir,” returned the doctor, shaking his head, “whether it is the same with other legs, or not the same.”

"But I do mind," said David.

"I take a particular case, Mr. Montague," returned the doctor, "as illustrating my remark, you observe. In this portion of Mr. Crimple's leg, sir, there is a certain amount of animal oil. In every one of Mr. Crimple's joints, sir, there is more or less of the same deposit. Very good. If Mr. Crimple neglects his meals, or fails to take his proper quantity of rest, that oil wanes and becomes exhausted. What is the consequence? Mr. Crimple's bones sink down in their sockets, sir, and Mr. Crimple becomes a weazen, puny, stunted, miserable man!"

The doctor let Mr. Crimple's leg fall suddenly, as if he were already in that agreeable condition; turned down his wristbands again, and looked triumphantly at the chairman.

"We know a few secrets of nature in our profession, sir," said the doctor. "Of course we do. We study for that; we pass the Hall and the College for that; and we take our situation in society *by* that. It's extraordinary how little is known on these subjects generally. Where do you suppose, now?" the doctor closed one eye, as he leaned back smilingly in his chair, and formed a triangle with his hands, of which his two thumbs composed the base: "where do you suppose Mr. Crimple's stomach is?"

Mr. Crimple, more agitated than before, clapped his hand immediately below his waistcoat.

"Not at all," cried the doctor; "not at all. Quite a popular mistake. My good sir, you're altogether deceived."

"I feel it there, when it's out of order; that's all I know," said Crimple.

"You think you do," replied the doctor; "but science knows better. There was a patient of mine once;" touching one of the many mourning rings upon his fingers, and slightly bowing his head: "a gentleman who did me the honor to make a very handsome mention of me in his will—'in testimony,' as he was pleased to say, 'of the unremitting zeal, talent, and attention of my friend and medical attendant, John

Jobling, Esquire, M. R. C. S.'—who was so overcome by the idea of having all his life labored under an erroneous view of the locality of this important organ, that when I assured him, on my professional reputation, he was mistaken, he burst into tears, put out his hand, and said, 'Jobling, God bless you!' Immediately afterwards he became speechless, and was ultimately buried at Brixton."

"**W**HAT do you call this house? Not the Dragon, do you?"

Mrs. Lupin complacently made answer, "Yes, the Dragon."

"Why, then, you've got a sort of relation of mine here, ma'am," said the traveller: "a young man by the name of Tapley. What! Mark! my boy!" apostrophizing the premises, "have I come upon you at last, old buck!"

This was touching Mrs. Lupin on a tender point. She turned to trim the candle on the chimney-piece, and said, with her back towards the traveller:

"Nobody should be made more welcome at the Dragon, master, than any one who brought me news of Mark. But it's many and many a long day and month since he left here and England. And whether he's alive or dead, poor fellow, Heaven above us only knows!"

She shook her head, and her voice trembled; her hand must have done so, too, for the light required a deal of trimming.

"Where did he go, ma'am?" asked the traveller, in a gentler voice.

"He went," said Mrs. Lupin, with increased distress, "to America. He was always tender-hearted and kind, and perhaps at this moment may be lying in prison under sentence of death, for taking pity on some miserable black, and helping the poor runaway creetur to escape. How could he ever go to America! Why didn't he go to some of those countries where the savages eat each other fairly, and give an equal chance to every one!"

Quite subdued by this time, Mrs. Lupin sobbed, and was

retiring to a chair to give her grief free vent, when the traveller caught her in his arms, and she uttered a cry of recognition.

“Yes, I will!” cried Mark, “another—one more—twenty more! You didn’t know me in that hat and coat? I thought you would have known me anywheres! Ten more!”

“So I should have known you, if I could have seen you; but I couldn’t, and you spoke so gruff. I didn’t think you could speak gruff to me, Mark, at first coming back.”

“Fifteen more!” said Mr. Tapley. “How handsome and how young you look! Six more! The last half-dozen warn’t a fair one, and must be done over again. Lord bless you, what a treat it is to see you! One more! Well, I never was so jolly. Just a few more, on account of there not being any credit in it!”

When Mr. Tapley stopped in these calculations in simple addition, he did it, not because he was at all tired of the exercise, but because he was out of breath. The pause reminded him of other duties.

“Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit’s outside,” he said. “I left him under the cart-shed, while I came on to see if there was anybody here. We want to keep quiet to-night, till we know the news from you, and what it’s best for us to do.”

“There’s not a soul in the house, except the kitchen company,” returned the hostess. “If they were to know you had come back, Mark, they’d have a bonfire in the street, late as it is.”

“But they mustn’t know it to-night, my precious soul,” said Mark; “so have the house shut, and the kitchen fire made up; and when it’s all ready, put a light in the winder, and we’ll come in. One more! I long to hear about old friends. You’ll tell me all about ’em, won’t you: Mr. Pinch, and the butcher’s dog down the street, and the terrier over the way, and the wheelwright’s, and every one of ’em. When I first caught sight of the church to-night, I thought the steeple would have choked me, I did. One more! Won’t you? Not a little one to finish off with?”

“You have had plenty, I am sure,” said the hostess. “Go along with your foreign manners !”

“That ain’t foreign, bless you !” cried Mark. “Native as oysters, that is ! One more, because it’s native ! As a mark of respect for the land we live in ! This don’t count as between you and me, you understand,” said Mr. Tapley. “I ain’t a-kissing you now, you’ll observe. I have been among the patriots ! I’m a-kissing my country !”

MARK’S uncertainty in respect of what was going to be done or said, and by whom to whom, would have excited him in itself. But knowing for a certainty besides, that young Martin was coming, and in a very few minutes must arrive, he found it by no means easy to remain quiet and silent. But, excepting that he occasionally coughed in a hollow and unnatural manner to relieve himself, he behaved with great decorum through the longest ten minutes he had ever known.

A knock at the door. Mr. Westlock. Mr. Tapley, in admitting him, raised his eyebrows to the highest possible pitch, implying thereby that he considered himself in an unsatisfactory position. Mr. Chuzzlewit received him very courteously.

Mark waited at the door for Tom Pinch and his sister, who were coming up the stairs. The old man went to meet them, took their hands in his, and kissed her on the cheek. As this looked promising, Mr. Tapley smiled benignantly.

Mr. Chuzzlewit had resumed his chair before young Martin, who was close behind them, entered. The old man, scarcely looking at him, pointed to a distant seat. This was less encouraging, and Mr. Tapley’s spirits fell again.

He was quickly summoned to the door by another knock. He did not start, or cry, or tumble down, at sight of Miss Graham and Mrs. Lupin, but he drew a very long breath, and came back perfectly resigned, looking on them and on the rest with an expression which seemed to say that nothing could surprise him any more ; and that he was rather glad to have done with that sensation forever.

The old man received Mary no less tenderly than he had received Tom Pinch's sister. A look of friendly recognition passed between himself and Mrs. Lupin, which implied the existence of a perfect understanding between them. It engendered no astonishment in Mr. Tapley, for, as he afterwards observed, he had retired from the business and sold off the stock.

Not the least curious feature in this assemblage was, that everybody present was so much surprised and embarrassed by the sight of everybody else, that nobody ventured to speak. Mr. Chuzzlewit alone broke silence.

"Set the door open, Mark," he said, "and come here." Mark obeyed.

The last appointed footstep sounded now upon the stairs. They all knew it. It was Mr. Pecksniff's; and Mr. Pecksniff was in a hurry, too, for he came bounding up with such uncommon expedition that he stumbled twice or thrice.

"Where is my venerable friend?" he cried upon the upper landing; and then with open arms came darting in.

"**D**RAG him away! Take him out of my reach!" said Martin; "or I can't help it. The strong restraint I have put upon my hands has been enough to palsy them. I am not master of myself while he is within their range. Drag him away!"

Seeing that he still did not rise, Mr. Tapley, without any compromise about it, actually did drag him away, and stick him up on the floor, with his back against the opposite wall.

"Hear me, rascal!" said Mr. Chuzzlewit. "I have summoned you here to witness your own work. I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know it will be gall and wormwood to you! I have summoned you here to witness it, because I know the sight of everybody here must be a dagger in your mean, false heart! What! do you know me as I am, at last?"

Mr. Pecksniff had cause to stare at him, for the triumph in his face and speech and figure was a sight to stare at.

“Look there!” said the old man, pointing at him, and appealing to the rest. “Look there! And then—come hither, my dear Martin—look here! here! here!” At every repetition of the word he pressed his grandson closer to his breast.

“The passion I felt, Martin, when I dared not do this,” he said, “was in the blow I struck just now. Why did we ever part? How could we ever part? How could you ever fly from me to him?”

Martin was about to answer, but he stopped him, and went on.

“The fault was mine no less than yours. Mark has told me so to-day, and I have known it long, though not so long as I might have done. Mary, my love, come here.”

And she trembled and was very pale, he sat her in his own chair, and stood beside it with her hand in his; and Martin standing by him.

“The curse of our house,” said the old man, looking kindly down upon her, “has been the love of self; has ever been the love of self. How often have I said so, when I never knew that I had wrought it upon others!”

He drew one hand through Martin’s arm, and standing so, between them, proceeded thus:

“You all know how I bred this orphan up, to tend me. None of you can know by what degrees I have come to regard her as a daughter; for she has won upon me, by her self-forgetfulness, her tenderness, her patience, all the goodness of her nature, when Heaven is her witness that I took but little pains to draw it forth. It blossomed without cultivation, and it ripened without heat. I cannot find it in my heart to say that I am sorry for it now, or yonder fellow might be holding up his head.”

“PRAY,” interposed Miss Pecksniff, “do not allow Augustus, at this awful moment of his life and mine, to be the means of disturbing that harmony which it is ever

Augustus' and my wish to maintain. Augustus has not been introduced to any of my relations now present. He preferred not."

"Why, then, I venture to assert," cried Mr. Spottletoe, "that the man who aspires to join this family, and 'prefers not' to be introduced to its members, is an impertinent Puppy. That is my opinion of *him*!"

The strong-minded woman remarkèd with great suavity, that she was afraid he must be. Her three daughters observed aloud that it was "shameful!"

"You do not know Augustus," said Miss Pecksniff, tearfully, "indeed you do not know him. Augustus is all mildness and humility. Wait 'till you see Augustus, and I am sure he will conciliate your affections."

"The question arises," said Spottletoe, folding his arms: "How long we are to wait? I am not accustomed to wait; that's the fact. And I want to know how long we are expected to wait."

"Mrs. Todgers!" said Charity, "Mr. Jenkins! I am afraid there must be some mistake. I think Augustus must have gone straight to the Altar!"

As such a thing was possible, and the church was close at hand, Mr. Jenkins ran off to see, accompanied by Mr. George Chuzzlewit, the bachelor cousin, who preferred anything to the aggravation of sitting near the breakfast, without being able to eat it. But they came back with no other tidings than a familiar message from the clerk, importing that if they wanted to be married that morning they had better look sharp, as the curate wasn't going to wait there all day.

The bride was now alarmed; seriously alarmed. Good Heavens, what could have happened! Augustus! Dear Augustus!

Mr. Jenkins volunteered to take a cab, and seek him at the newly-furnished house. The strong-minded woman administered comfort to Miss Pecksniff. "It was a specimen of what she had to expect. It would do her good. It would dispel the romance of the affair." The red-nosed daughters

also administered the kindest comfort. "Perhaps he'd come," they said. The sketchy nephew hinted that he might have fallen off a bridge. The wrath of Mr. Spottletoe resisted all the entreaties of his wife. Everybody spoke at once, and Miss Pecksniff, with clasped hands, sought consolation everywhere and found it nowhere, when Jenkins, having met the postman at the door, came back with a letter, which he put into her hand.

Miss Pecksniff opened it; glanced at it; uttered a piercing shriek; threw it down upon the ground; and fainted away.

They picked it up; and crowding around, and looking over one another's shoulders, read, in the words and dashes following, this communication:

"OFF GRAVESEND.

"CLIPPER SCHOONER CUPID.

"*Wednesday night.*

"EVER-INJURED MISS PECKSNIFF,

"Ere this reaches you, the undersigned will be—if not a corpse—on the way to Van Diemen's Land. Send not in pursuit. I never will be taken alive.

"The burden—300 tons per register—forgive, if in my distraction I allude to the ship—on my mind—has been truly dreadful. Frequently—when you have sought to soothe my brow with kisses—has self-destruction flashed across me. Frequently—incredible as it may seem—have I abandoned the idea.

"I love another. She is Another's. Everything appears to be somebody else's. Nothing in the world is mine—not even my Situation—which I have forfeited—by my rash conduct—in running away.

"If you ever loved me, hear my last appeal! The last appeal of a miserable and blighted exile. Forward the enclosed—it is the key of my desk—to the office—by hand. Please address to Bobbs and Cholberry—I mean to Chobbs and Bolberry—but my mind is totally unhinged. I left a penknife—

with a buckhorn handle—in your work-box. It will repay the messenger. May it make him happier than it ever did me!

“Oh, Miss Pecksniff, why didn’t you leave me alone! Was it not cruel, *cruel*! Oh, my goodness, have you not been a witness of my feelings—have you not seen them flowing from my eyes—did you not, yourself, reproach me with weeping more than usual on that dreadful night when last we met—in that house—where I once was peaceful—though blighted—in the society of Mrs. Todgers!

“But it was written—in the Talmud—that you should involve yourself in the inscrutable and gloomy Fate which it is my mission to accomplish, and which wreathes itself—e’en now—about my—temples. I will not reproach, for I have wronged you. May the Furniture make some amends!

“Farewell! Be the proud bride of a ducal coronet, and forget me! Long may it be before you know the anguish with which I now subscribe myself—amid the tempestuous howling of the—sailors,

“Unalterably, never yours,

“AUGUSTUS.”

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

“**A**H! Newman,” said Mr. Nickleby, looking up as he pursued his occupation. “The letter about the mortgage has come, has it? I thought it would.”

“Wrong,” replied Newman.

“What! and nobody called respecting it?” inquired Mr. Nickleby, pausing. Noggs shook his head.

“What *has* come, then?” inquired Mr. Nickleby.

“I have,” said Newman.

“What else?” demanded the master sternly.

“This,” said Newman, drawing a sealed letter slowly from

his pocket. "Postmark, Strand, black wax, black border, woman's hand, C. N. in the corner."

"Black wax?" said Mr. Nickleby, glancing at the letter. "I know something of that hand, too. Newman, I shouldn't be surprised if my brother were dead."

"I don't think you would," said Newman, quietly.

"Why not, sir?" demanded Mr. Nickleby.

"You never are surprised," replied Newman, "that's all."

NEWMAN fell a little behind his master, and his face was curiously twisted as by a spasm; but whether of paralysis, or grief, or inward laughter, nobody but himself could possibly explain. The expression of a man's face is commonly a help to his thoughts, or glossary on his speech; but the countenance of Newman Noggs, in his ordinary moods, was a problem which no stretch of ingenuity could solve.

"HALF-PAST three," muttered Mr. Squeers, turning from the window, and looking sulkily at the coffee-room clock. "There will be nobody here to-day."

Much vexed by this reflection, Mr. Squeers looked at the little boy to see whether he was doing anything he could beat him for. As he happened not to be doing anything at all, he merely boxed his ears, and told him not to do it again.

"At Midsummer," muttered Mr. Squeers, resuming his complaint, "I took down ten boys; ten twentys is two hundred pound. I go back at eight o'clock to-morrow morning, and have got only three—three aughts is an aught—three twos is six—sixty pound. What's come of all the boys? what's parents got in their heads? what does it all mean?"

Here the little boy on the top of the trunk gave a violent sneeze.

"Halloa, sir!" growled the schoolmaster, turning round. "What's that, sir?"

"Nothing, please sir," said the little boy.

"Nothing, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Squeers.

"Please sir, I sneezed," rejoined the boy, till the little trunk shook under him.

"Oh! sneezed, did you?" retorted Mr. Squeers. "Then what did you say 'nothing' for, sir?"

In default of a better answer to this question, the little boy screwed a couple of knuckles into his eyes and began to cry, wherefore Mr. Squeers knocked him off the trunk with a blow on one side of his face, and knocked him on again with a blow on the other.

"Wait till I get you down into Yorkshire, my young gentleman," said Mr. Squeers, "and then I'll give you the rest. Will you hold that noise, sir?"

"Ye—ye—yes," sobbed the little boy, rubbing his face very hard with the Beggar's Petition in printed calico.

"Then do it at once, sir," said Squeers. "Do you hear?"

As this admonition was accompanied with a threatening gesture, and uttered with a savage aspect, the little boy rubbed his face harder, as if to keep the tears back; and, beyond alternately sniffing and choking, gave no further vent to his emotions.

"Mr. Squeers," said the waiter, looking in at this juncture; "here's a gentleman asking for you at the bar."

"Show the gentleman in, Richard," replied Mr. Squeers, in a soft voice. "Put your handkerchief in your pocket, you little scoundrel, or I'll murder you when the gentleman goes."

The schoolmaster had scarcely uttered these words in a fierce whisper, when the stranger entered. Affecting not to see him, Mr. Squeers feigned to be intent upon mending a pen, and offering benevolent advice to his youthful pupil.

NICHOLAS slept well till six next morning; dreamed of home, or of what was home once—no matter which, for things that are changed or gone will come back as they used to be, thank God! in sleep—and rose quite brisk and gay. He wrote a few lines in pencil, to say the good-by which he was afraid to pronounce himself, and laying them, with half

his scanty stock of money, at his sister's door, shouldered his box and crept softly downstairs.

"Is that you, Hannah?" cried a voice from Miss La Creevy's sitting-room, whence shone the light of a feeble candle.

"It is I, Miss La Creevy," said Nicholas, putting down the box and looking in.

"Bless us!" exclaimed Miss La Creevy, starting and putting her hand to her curl-papers; "you're up very early, Mr. Nickleby."

"So are you," replied Nicholas.

"It's the fine arts that bring me out of bed, Mr. Nickleby," returned the lady. "I'm waiting for the light to carry out an idea."

Miss La Creevy had got up early to put a fancy nose into a miniature of an ugly little boy, destined for his grandmother in the country, who was expected to bequeath him property if he was like the family.

"To carry out an idea," repeated Miss La Creevy; "and that's the great convenience of living in a thoroughfare like the Strand. When I want a nose or an eye for any particular sitter, I have only to look out of window and wait till I get one."

"Does it take long to get a nose, now?" inquired Nicholas, smiling.

"Why, that depends in a great measure on the pattern," replied Miss La Creevy. "Snubs and romans are plentiful enough, and there are flats of all sorts and sizes when there's a meeting at Exeter Hall; but perfect aquilines, I am sorry to say, are scarce, and we generally use them for uniforms or public characters."

"Indeed!" said Nicholas. "If I should meet with any in my travels, I'll endeavor to sketch them for you."

"**S**AVE you, fair daughters!" said the friar; and fair in truth they were. Even a monk might have loved them as choice master-pieces of his Maker's hand.

“The sisters saluted the holy man with becoming reverence, and the eldest motioned him to a mossy seat beside them. But the good friar shook his head, and bumped himself down on a very hard stone,—at which, no doubt, approving angels were gratified.

“‘Ye were merry, daughters,’ said the monk.

“‘You know how light of heart sweet Alice is,’ replied the eldest sister, passing her fingers through the tresses of the smiling girl.

“‘And what joy and cheerfulness it wakes up within us, to see all nature beaming in brightness and sunshine, father,’ added Alice, blushing beneath the stern look of the recluse.

“The monk answered not, save by a grave inclination of the head, and the sisters pursued their task in silence.

“‘Still wasting the precious hours,’ said the monk at length, turning to the eldest sister as he spoke, ‘still wasting the precious hours on this vain trifling. Alas, alas! that the few bubbles on the surface of eternity—all that Heaven wills we should see of that dark, deep stream—should be so lightly scattered!’

“‘Father,’ urged the maiden, pausing, as did each of the others, in her busy task, ‘we have prayed at matins, our daily alms have been distributed at the gate, the sick peasants have been tended—all our morning tasks have been performed. I hope our occupation is a blameless one?’

“‘See here,’ said the friar, taking the frame from her hand, ‘an intricate winding of gaudy colors, without purpose or object, unless it be that one day it is destined for some vain ornament, to minister to the pride of your frail and giddy sex. Day after day has been employed upon this senseless task, and yet it is not half accomplished. The shade of each departed day falls upon our graves, and the worm exults as he beholds it, to know that we are hastening thither. Daughters, is there no better way to pass the fleeting hours?’

“The four elder sisters cast down their eyes as if abashed by

the holy man's reproof, but Alice raised hers, and bent them mildly on the friar.

“ ‘Our dear mother,’ said the maiden; ‘Heaven rest her soul!’

“ ‘Amen!’ cried the friar, in a deep voice.

“ ‘Our dear mother,’ faltered the fair Alice, ‘was living when these long tasks began, and bade us, when she should be no more, ply them in all discretion and cheerfulness, in our leisure hours; she said that if in harmless mirth and maidenly pursuits we passed those hours together, they would prove the happiest and most peaceful of our lives, and that if, in later times, we went forth into the world, and mingled with its cares and trials—if, allured by its temptations and dazzled by its glitter, we ever forgot that love and duty which should bind, in holy ties, the children of one loved parent—a glance at the old work of our common girlhood would awaken good thoughts of by-gone days, and soften our hearts to affection and love.’

“ ‘Alice speaks truly, father,’ said the elder sister, somewhat proudly. And so saying she resumed her work, as did the others.

“It was a kind of sampler of large size, that each sister had before her; the device was of a complex and intricate description, and the pattern and colors of all five were the same. The sisters bent gracefully over their work; the monk, resting his chin upon his hands, looked from one to the other in silence.

“ ‘How much better,’ he said at length, ‘to shun all such thoughts and chances, and, in the peaceful shelter of the church, devote your lives to Heaven! Infancy, childhood, the prime of life, and old age, wither as rapidly as they crowd upon each other. Think how human dust rolls onward to the tomb, and turning your faces steadily towards that goal, avoid the cloud which takes its rise among the pleasures of the world, and cheats the senses of their votaries. The veil, daughters, the veil!’

“ ‘Never, sisters,’ cried Alice. ‘Barter not the light and air of heaven, and the freshness of earth and all the beautiful things which breathe upon it, for the cold cloister and the cell. Nature’s own blessings are the proper goods of life, and we

may share them sinlessly together. To die is our heavy portion, but, oh, let us die with life about us ; when our cold hearts cease to beat, let warm hearts be beating near ; let our last look be upon the bounds which God has set to his own bright skies, and not on stone walls and bars of iron ! Dear sisters, let us live and die, if you list, in this green garden's compass ; only shun the gloom and sadness of a cloister, and we shall be happy.' ”

MR. SQUEERS then proceeded to open a miscellaneous collection of letters ; some inclosing money, which Mrs. Squeers “took care of ;” and others referring to small articles of apparel, as caps and so forth, all of which the same lady states to be too large, or too small, and calculated for nobody but young Squeers, who would appear indeed to have had most accommodating limbs, since everything that came into the school fitted him to a nicety. His head, in particular, must have been singularly elastic, for hats and caps of all dimensions were alike to him.

“NOW, ma'am,” said Ralph, who had looked on at all this with such scorn as few men can express in looks, “this is my niece.”

“Just so, Mr. Nickleby,” replied Madame Mantalini, surveying Kate from head to foot, and back again. “Can you speak French, child ?”

“Yes, ma'am,” replied Kate, not daring to look up ; for she felt that the eyes of the odious man in the dressing-gown were directed towards her.

“Like a demd native ?” asked the husband.

Miss Nickleby offered no reply to this inquiry, but turned her back upon the questioner, as if addressing herself to make answer to what his wife might demand.

“We keep twenty young women constantly employed in the establishment,” said Madame.

"Indeed, ma'am," replied Kate, timidly.

"Yes; and some of 'em demd handsome, too," said the master.

"Mantalini!" exclaimed his wife, in an awful voice.

"My senses' idol!" said Mantalini.

"Do you wish to break my heart?"

"Not for twenty thousand hemispheres populated with—with little ballet-dancers," replied Mantalini, in a poetical strain.

"Then you will, if you persevere in that mode of speaking," said his wife. "What can Mr. Nickleby think when he hears you?"

"Oh! Nothing, ma'am, nothing," replied Ralph. "I know his amiable nature and yours—mere little remarks that give a zest to your daily intercourse—lovers' quarrels that add sweetness to those domestic joys which promise to last so long—that's all; that's all."

"**H**OW lovely your hair do curl to-night, miss!" said the handmaiden. "I declare if it isn't a pity and a shame to brush it out!"

"Hold your tongue!" replied Miss Squeers wrathfully.

Some considerable experience prevented the girl from being at all surprised at any outbreak of ill-temper on the part of Miss Squeers. Having a half perception of what had occurred in the course of the evening, she changed her mode of making herself agreeable, and proceeded on the indirect track.

"Well, I couldn't help saying, miss, if you was to kill me for it," said the attendant, "that I never see nobody look so vulgar as Miss Price this night."

Miss Squeers sighed, and composed herself to listen.

"I know it's very wrong in me to say so, miss," continued the girl, delighted to see the impression she was making, "Miss Price being a friend of your'n, and all; but she do dress herself out so, and go on in such a manner to get noticed, that—oh—well, if people only saw themselves!"

“What do you mean, Phib?” asked Miss Squeers, looking in her own little glass, where, like most of us, she saw—not herself, but the reflection of some pleasant image in her own brain. “How you talk!”

“Talk, miss! It’s enough to make a tom-cat talk French grammar, only to see how she tosses her head,” replied the handmaid.

MR. KENWIGS was on the point of repairing to Mr. Noggs’s room, to demand an explanation, and had indeed swallowed a preparatory glass of punch, with great inflexibility and steadiness of purpose, when the attention of all present was diverted by a new and terrible surprise.

This was nothing less than the sudden pouring forth of a rapid succession of the shrillest and most piercing screams, from an upper story; and to all appearance from the very two-pair back in which the infant Kenwigs was at that moment enshrined. They were no sooner audible, than Mrs. Kenwigs, opining that a strange cat had come in, and sucked the baby’s breath while the girl was asleep, made for the door, wringing her hands and shrieking dismally, to the great consternation and confusion of the company.

“Mr. Kenwigs, see what it is; make haste!” cried the sister, laying violent hands upon Mrs. Kenwigs, and holding her back by force. “Oh don’t twist about so, dear, or I can never hold you.”

“My baby, my blessed, blessed, blessed, blessed baby?” screamed Mrs. Kenwigs, making every blessed louder than the last. “My own darling, sweet, innocent Lillyvick—Oh let me go to him. Let me go-o-o-o!”

Pending the utterances of these frantic cries, and the wails and lamentations of the four little girls, Mr. Kenwigs rushed upstairs to the room whence the sounds proceeded; at the door of which he encountered Nicholas, with the child in his arms, who darted out with such violence that the anxious

father was thrown down six stairs, and alighted on the nearest landing-place before he had found time to open his mouth to ask what was the matter.

“Don’t be alarmed,” cried Nicholas, running down; “here it is; it’s all out, it’s all over; pray compose yourself; there’s no harm done;” and with these, and a thousand other assurances, he delivered the baby (whom in his hurry he had carried upside down) to Mrs. Kenwigs, and ran back to assist Mr. Kenwigs, who was rubbing his head very hard, and looking much bewildered by his tumble.

Reassured by this cheering intelligence, the company in some degree recovered from their fears, which had been productive of some most singular instances of a total want of presence of mind: thus, the bachelor friend had for a long time supported in his arms Mrs. Kenwig’s sister, instead of Mrs. Kenwigs; and the worthy Mr. Lillyvick had been actually seen, in the perturbation of his spirits, to kiss Miss Petowker several times, behind the room door, as calmly as if nothing distressing were going forward.

“MY cup of happiness’s sweetener,” said Mantalini, approaching his wife with a penitent air; “will you listen to me for two minutes?”

“Oh! don’t speak to me,” replied his wife, sobbing. “You have ruined me, and that’s enough.”

Mr. Mantalini, who had doubtless well considered his part, no sooner heard these words pronounced in a tone of grief and severity, than he recoiled several paces, assumed an expression of consuming mental agony, rushed headlong from the room, and was, soon afterwards, heard to slam the door of an upstairs dressing-room with great violence.

“Miss Nickleby,” cried Madame Mantalini, when this sound met her ear, “make haste, for Heaven’s sake; he will destroy himself! I spoke unkindly to him, and he cannot bear it from me. Alfred, my darling Alfred.”

With such exclamations, she hurried upstairs, followed by Kate, who, although she did not quite participate in the fond wife's apprehensions, was a little flurried, nevertheless. The dressing-room door being hastily flung open, Mr. Mantalini was disclosed to view, with his shirt-collar symmetrically thrown back : putting a fine edge to a breakfast knife by means of his razor-strop.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Mantalini, "Interrupted!" and whisk went the breakfast knife into Mr. Mantalini's dressing-gown pocket, while Mr. Mantalini's eyes rolled wildly, and his hair floating in wild disorder, mingled with his whiskers.

"Alfred," cried his wife, flinging her arms about him, "I didn't mean to say it, I didn't mean to say it!"

"Ruined!" cried Mr. Mantalini. "Have I brought ruin upon the best and purest creature that ever blessed a demnition vagabond! Demmit, let me go." At this crisis of his ravings Mr. Mantalini made a pluck at the breakfast knife, and being restrained by his wife's grasp, attempted to dash his head against the wall—taking very good care to be at least six feet from it.

"**W**ERE you obliged to have medical attendance?" inquired Ralph.

"Ay, was I," rejoined Squeers, "and a precious bill the medical attendant brought in too ; but I paid it though."

Ralph elevated his eyebrows in a manner which might be well expressive of either sympathy or astonishment. Just as the beholder was pleased to take it.

"Yes, I paid it, every farthing," replied Squeers, who seemed to know the man he had to deal with too well to suppose that any blinking of the question would induce him to subscribe towards the expenses ; "I wasn't out of pocket by it after all, either."

"No?" said Ralph.

"Not a halfpenny," replied Squeers. "The fact is, we have

only one extra with our boys, and that is for doctors when required—and not then, unless we're sure of our customers. Do you see?"

"I understand," said Ralph.

"Very good," rejoined Squeers. "Then, after my bill was run up, we picked out five little boys (sons of small tradesmen, as was sure pay) that had never had the scarlet fever, and we sent one to a cottage where they'd got it, and he took it, and then we put the four others to sleep with him, and *they* took it, and then the doctor came and attended 'em once all round, and we divided my total among 'em, and added it on to their little bills, and the parents paid it. Ha! ha! ha!"

"And a good plan too," said Ralph, eying the schoolmaster stealthily.

"I believe you," rejoined Squeers. "We always do it. Why, when Mrs. Squeers was brought to bed with little Wackford here, we ran the whooping-cough through half a dozen boys, and charged her expenses among 'em, monthly nurse included. Ha! ha! ha!"

Ralph never laughed, but on this occasion he produced the nearest approach to it that he could, and waiting until Mr. Squeers had enjoyed the professional joke to his heart's content, inquired what had brought him to town.

"DON'T *missis* me, ma'am, if you please," returned Miss Squeers, sharply. "I'll not bear it. Is *this* the hend—"

"Dang it a'," cried John Browdie, impatiently. "Say thee say out, Fanny, and mak sure it's the end, and dinnot ask nobody whether it is or not."

"Thanking you for your advice which was not required, Mr. Browdie," returned Miss Squeers, with laborious politeness, "have the goodness not to presume to meddle with my Christian name. Even my pity shall never make me forget what's due to myself, Mr. Browdie. 'Tilda," said Miss Squeers, with

such a sudden accession of violence that John started in his boots, "I throw you off forever, miss. I abandon you. I renounce you. I wouldn't," cried Miss Squeers in a solemn voice, "have a child named 'Tilda, not to save it from its grave."

"As for the matter o' that," observed John, "it'll be time enef to think about neaming of it when it cooms."

"John!" interposed his wife, "don't tease her."

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

"**M**IGGS?" cried Mr. Tappertit, "don't you know me?
Sim, you know—Sim—"

"Oh! what about him?" cried Miggs, clasping her hands. "Is he in any danger? Is he in the midst of flames and blazes! Oh gracious, gracious!"

"Why, I'm here, an't I?" rejoined Mr. Tappertit, knocking himself on the breast. "Don't you see me? What a fool you are, Miggs?"

"There!" cried Miggs, unmindful of this compliment. "Why—so it—Goodness, what is the meaning of—If you please mim here's—"

"No, no!" cried Mr. Tappertit, standing on tiptoe, as if by that means he, in the street, were any nearer being able to stop the mouth of Miggs in the garret. "Don't!—I've been out without leave, and something or another's the matter with the lock. Come down, and undo the shop-window, that I may get in that way."

"I dursn't do it, Simmun," cried Miggs—for that was her pronunciation of his Christian name. "I dursn't do it, indeed. You know as well as anybody, how particular I am. And to come down in the dead of night, when the house is wrapped in slumbers and veiled in obscurity." And there she

stopped and shivered, for her modesty caught cold at the very thought.

"But Miggs," cried Mr. Tappertit, getting under the lamp, that she might see his eyes. "My darling Miggs—"

Miggs screamed slightly.

"—That I love so much, and never can help thinking of," and it is impossible to describe the use he made of his eyes when he said this—"do—for my sake, do."

"Oh Simmun," cried Miggs, "this is worse than all. I know if I come down, you'll go, and—"

"And what, my precious?" said Mr. Tappertit.

"And try," said Miggs, hysterically, "to kiss me, or some such dreadfulness; I know you will!"

"I swear I won't," said Mr. Tappertit, with remarkable earnestness. "Upon my soul I won't. It's getting broad day, and the watchman's waking up. Angelic Miggs! If you'll only come and let me in, I promise you faithfully and truly I won't."

"**B**ARNABY," said the locksmith, after a hasty but careful inspection, "this man is not dead, but he has a wound in his side, and is in a fainting-fit."

"I know him, I know him!" cried Barnaby, clapping his hands.

"Know him?" repeated the locksmith.

"Hush!" said Barnaby, laying his fingers on his lips. "He went out to-day a-wooing. I wouldn't for a light guinea that he should never go a-wooing again, for, if he did, some eyes would grow dim that are now as bright as—see, when I talk of eyes, the stars come out! Whose eyes are they? If they are 'angels' eyes, why do they look down here, and see good men hurt, and only wink and sparkle all the night?"

HERE again the raven was in a highly reflective state; walking up and down when he had dined, with an air of elderly complacency, which was strongly suggestive of his

having his hands under his coat-tails ; and appearing to read the tombstones with a very critical taste. Sometimes, after a long inspection of an epitaph, he would strop his beak upon the grave to which it referred, and cry in his hoarse tones, "I'm a devil, I'm a devil, I'm a devil !" but whether he addressed his observations to any supposed person below, or merely threw them off as a general remark, is matter of uncertainty.

"**T**HEY must have been fond of you," remarked Mr. Tappertit, looking at him sideways.

"I don't know that they was exactly fond of me," said Dennis, with a little hesitation, "but they all had me near 'em when they departed. I come in for their wardrobes too. This very handkercher that you see round my neck belonged to him that I've been speaking of—him as did that likeness."

Mr. Tappertit glanced at the article referred to, and appeared to think that the deceased's ideas of dress were of a peculiar and by no means an expensive kind. He made no remark upon the point, however, and suffered his mysterious companion to proceed without interruption.

"These smalls," said Dennis, rubbing his legs ; "these very smalls—they belonged to a friend of mine that's left off sich incumbrances forever : this coat too—I've often walked behind this coat, in the streets, and wondered whether it would ever come to me ; this pair of shoes have danced a hornpipe for another man, afore my eyes, full half a dozen times at least : and as to my hat," he said, taking it off, and whirling it round upon his fist—"Lord ! I've seen this hat go up Holborn on the box of a hackney-coach—ah, many and many a day !"

"You don't mean to say their old wearers are *all* dead, I hope?" said Mr. Tappertit, falling a little distance from him, as he spoke.

"Every one of 'em," replied Dennis. "Every man, Jack !"

THE burning pile, revealing rooms and passages red-hot, through gaps made in the crumbling walls ; the tributary fires that licked the outer bricks and stones, with their long forked tongues, and ran up to meet the glowing mass within ; the shining of the flames upon the villains who looked on and fed them ; the roaring of the angry blaze, so bright and high that it seemed in its rapacity to have swallowed up the very smoke ; the living flakes the wind bore rapidly away and hurried on with, like a storm of fiery snow ; the noiseless breaking of great beams of wood, which fell like feathers on the heap of ashes, and crumbled in the very act to sparks and powder ; the lurid tinge that overspread the sky, and the darkness, very deep by contrast, which prevailed around ; the exposure to the coarse, common gaze, of every little nook which usages of home had made a sacred place, and the destruction by rude hands of every little household favorite which old associations made a dear and precious thing ; all this taking place—not among pitying looks and friendly murmurs of compassion, but brutal shouts and exultations, which seemed to make the very rats who stood by the old house too long, creatures with some claim upon the pity and regard of those its roof had sheltered—combined to form a scene never to be forgotten by those who saw it and were not actors in the work, so long as life endured.

THE mob gathering round Lord Mansfield's house, had called on those within to open the door, and receiving no reply (for Lord and Lady Mansfield were at that moment escaping by the backway), forced an entrance according to their usual custom. That they then began to demolish the house with great fury, and setting fire to it in several parts, involved in a common ruin the whole of the costly furniture, the plate and jewels, a beautiful gallery of pictures, the rarest collection of manuscripts ever possessed by any one private person in the world, and worse than all, because nothing could replace this loss, the great Law Library, on almost every page of which

were notes in the Judge's own hand, of inestimable value—being the results of the study and experience of his whole life. That while they were howling and exulting round the fire, a troop of soldiers, with a magistrate among them, came up, and being too late (for the mischief was by that time done), began to disperse the crowd. That the riot act being read, and the crowd still resisting, the soldiers received orders to fire, and levelling their muskets shot dead at the first discharge six men and a woman, and wounded many persons; and loading again directly, fired another volley, but over the people's heads it was supposed, as none were seen to fall. That thereupon, and daunted by the shrieks and tumult, the crowd began to disperse, and the soldiers went away, leaving the killed and wounded on the ground: which they had no sooner done than the rioters came back again, and taking up the dead bodies, and the wounded people, formed into a rude procession, having the bodies in the front. That in this order they paraded off with a horrible merriment; fixing weapons in the dead men's hands to make them look as if alive; and preceded by a fellow ringing Lord Mansfield's dinner-bell with all his might.

IF a roc, an eagle, a griffin, a flying elephant, a winged sea-horse, had suddenly appeared, and, taking him on its back, carried him bodily into the heart of the "Salwanners," it would have been to him as an everyday occurrence, in comparison with what he now beheld. To be sitting quietly by, seeing and hearing these things; to be completely overlooked, unnoticed, and disregarded, while his son and a young lady were talking to each other in the most impassioned manner, kissing each other, and making themselves in all respects perfectly at home; was a position so tremendous, so inexplicable, so utterly beyond the widest range of his capacity of comprehension, that he fell into a lethargy of wonder, and could no more rouse himself than an enchanted sleeper in the first year of his fairy lease, a century long.

“Father,” said Joe, presenting Dolly. “You know who this is?”

Mr. Willet looked first at her, then at his son, then back again at Dolly, and then made an ineffectual effort to extract a whiff from his pipe, which had gone out long ago.

“Say a word, father, if it’s only ‘how d’ye do,’ ” urged Joe.

“Certainly, Joseph,” answered Mr. Willet. “Oh yes! Why not?”

“To be sure,” said Joe. “Why not?”

“Ah!” replied his father. “Why not?” and with this remark, which he uttered in a low voice as though he were discussing some grave question with himself, he used the little finger—if any of his fingers can be said to have come under that denomination—of his right hand as a tobacco-stopper, and was silent again.

And so he sat for half an hour at least, although Dolly, in the most endearing of manners, hoped a dozen times, that he was not angry with her. So he sat for half an hour, quite motionless, and looking all the while like nothing so much as a great Dutch Pin or Skittle. At the expiration of that period, he suddenly, and without the least notice, burst (to the great consternation of the young people) into a very loud and very short laugh; and repeating “Certainly, Joseph. Oh yes! Why not?” went out for a walk.

DESCRIPTIONS OF PERSONS.



CHAPTER III.

FROM THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

THE child was closely followed by an elderly man of remarkably hard features and forbidding aspect, and so low in stature as to be quite a dwarf, though his head and face were large enough for the body of a giant. His black eyes were restless, sly, and cunning; his mouth and chin, bristly with the stubble of a coarse, hard beard; and his complexion was one of that kind which never looks clean or wholesome. But what added most to the grotesque expression of his face was a ghastly smile, which, appearing to be the mere result of habit and to have no connection with any mirthful or complacent feeling, constantly revealed the few discolored fangs that were yet scattered in his mouth, and gave him the aspect of a panting dog. His dress consisted of a large high-crowned hat, a worn dark suit, a pair of capacious shoes, and a dirty white neckerchief sufficiently limp and crumpled to disclose the greater portion of his wiry throat. Such hair as he had was of a grizzled black, cut short and straight upon his temples, and hanging in a frowzy fringe about his ears. His hands, which were of a rough coarse grain, were very dirty; his fingernails were crooked, long, and yellow.

MISS SALLY BRASS, then, was a lady of thirty-five or thereabouts, of a gaunt and bony figure, and a resolute bearing, which, if it repressed the softer emotions of love, and

kept admirers at a distance, certainly inspired a feeling akin to awe in the breasts of those male strangers who had the happiness to approach her. In face she bore a striking resemblance to her brother, Sampson—so exact, indeed, was the likeness between them, that had it consorted with Miss Brass's maiden modesty and gentle womanhood to have assumed her brother's clothes in a frolic and sat down beside him, it would have been difficult for the oldest friend of the family to determine which was Sampson and which Sally, especially as the lady carried upon her upper lip certain reddish demonstrations, which, if the imagination had been assisted by her attire, might have been mistaken for a beard. These were, however, in all probability, nothing more than eyelashes in a wrong place, as the eyes of Miss Brass were free quite from any such natural impertinencies. In complexion Miss Brass was sallow—rather a dirty sallow, so to speak—but this hue was agreeably relieved by the healthy glow which mantled in the extreme tip of her laughing nose. Her voice was exceedingly impressive—deep and rich in quality, and, once heard, not easily forgotten. Her usual dress was a green gown, in color not unlike the curtain of the office-window, made tight to the figure, and terminating at the throat, where it was fastened behind by a peculiarly large and massive button. Feeling, no doubt, that simplicity and plainness are the soul of elegance, Miss Brass wore no collar or kerchief except upon her head, which was invariably ornamented with a brown gauze scarf, like the wing of the fabled vampire, and which, twisted into any form that happened to suggest itself, formed an easy and graceful head-dress.

Such was Miss Brass in person. In mind, she was of strong and vigorous turn, having from her earliest youth devoted herself with uncommon ardor to the study of the law ; not wasting her speculations upon its eagle flights, which are rare ; but tracing it attentively through all the slippery and eel-like crawlings in which it commonly pursues its way. Nor had she, like many persons of great intellect, confined herself to theory, or stopped short where practical usefulness begins ; inasmuch as

she could engross, fair-copy, fill up printed forms with perfect accuracy, and, in short, transact any ordinary duty of the office down to pouncing a skin of parchment or mending a pen. It is difficult to understand how, possessed of these combined attractions, she should remain Miss Brass; but whether she had steeled her heart against mankind, or whether those who might have wooed and won her, were deterred by fears that, being learned in the law, she might have too near her fingers' ends those particular statutes which regulate what are familiarly termed actions for breach, certain it is that she was still in a state of celibacy, and still in daily occupation of her old stool opposite to that of her brother Sampson. And equally certain it is, by the way, that between these two stools a great many people had come to the ground.

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

DOMBEY sat in the corner of the darkened room in the great arm-chair by the bedside, and Son lay tucked up warm in a little basket bedstead, carefully disposed on a low settee immediately in front of the fire and close to it, as if his constitution were analogous to that of a muffin, and it was essential to toast him brown while he was very new.

Dombey was about eight-and-forty years of age. Son about eight-and-forty minutes. Dombey was rather bald, rather red, and though a handsome, well-made man, too stern and pompous in appearance to be prepossessing. Son was very bald, and very red, and though (of course) an undeniably fine infant, somewhat crushed and spotty in his general effect, as yet. On the brow of Dombey, Time and his brother Care had set some marks, as on a tree that was to come down in good time—remorseless twins they are for striding through their human forests, notching as they go—while the countenance of

Son was crossed and recrossed with a thousand little creases, which the same deceitful Time would take delight in smoothing out and wearing away with the flat part of his scythe, as a preparation of the surface for his deeper operations.

TO record of Mr. Dombey that he was not in his way affected by this intelligence, would be to do him an injustice. He was not a man of whom it could properly be said that he was ever startled or shocked; but he certainly had a sense within him, that if his wife should sicken and decay, he would be very sorry, and that he would find a something gone from among his plate and furniture, and other household possessions, which was well worth the having, and could not be lost without sincere regret. Though it would be a cool, business-like, gentlemanly, self-possessed regret, no doubt.

THE lady thus specially presented, was a long, lean figure, wearing such a faded air that she seemed not to have been made in what linen-draperies call "fast-colors" originally, and to have by little and little washed out. But for this she might have been described as the very pink of general propitiation and politeness. From a long habit of listening admirably to everything that was said in her presence, and looking at the speakers as if she were mentally engaged in taking off impressions of their images upon her soul, never to part with the same but with life, her head had quite settled on one side. Her hands had contracted a spasmodic habit of raising themselves of their own accord as in involuntary admiration. Her eyes were liable to a similar affection. She had the softest voice that ever was heard; and her nose, stupendously aquiline, had a little knob in the very centre or key-stone of the bridge, whence it tended downwards towards her face, as in an invincible determination never to turn up at anything.

THIS celebrated Mrs. Pipchin was a marvellous ill-favored, ill-conditioned old lady, of a stooping figure, with a mottled face, like bad marble, a hook nose, and a hard gray eye, that looked as if it might have been hammered at on an anvil without sustaining any injury. Forty years at least had elapsed since the Peruvian mines had been the death of Mr. Pipchin; but his relict still wore black bombazine, of such a lustreless, deep, dead, sombre shade, that gas itself couldn't light her up after dark, and her presence was a quencher to any number of candles. She was generally spoken of as "a great manager" of children; and the secret of her management was, to give them everything that they didn't like, and nothing that they did—which was found to sweeten their dispositions very much. She was such a bitter old lady, that one was tempted to believe there had been some mistake in the application of the Peruvian machinery, and that all her waters of gladness and milk of human kindness had been pumped out dry, instead of the mines.

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

NOW, if, during this brief period, Oliver had been surrounded by careful grandmothers, anxious aunts, experienced nurses, and doctors of profound wisdom, he would most inevitably and indubitably have been killed in no time. There being nobody by, however, but a pauper old woman, who was rendered rather misty by an unwonted allowance of beer, and a parish surgeon who did such matters by contract, Oliver and Nature fought out the point between them. The result was that, after a few struggles, Oliver breathed, sneezed, and proceeded to advertise to the inmates of the workhouse the fact of a new burden having been imposed upon the parish, by setting up as loud a cry as could reasonably have been expected from a male infant who had not been possessed of that very

useful appendage, a voice, for a much longer space of time than three minutes and a quarter.

OLIVER TWIST'S ninth birthday found him a pale, thin child, somewhat diminutive in stature, and decidedly small in circumference. But nature or inheritance had implanted a good, sturdy spirit in Oliver's breast. It had had plenty of room to expand, thanks to the spare diet of the establishment; and perhaps to this circumstance may be attributed his having any ninth birthday at all. Be this as it may however, it *was* his ninth birthday; and he was keeping it in the coal-cellar, with a select party of two other young gentlemen, who, after participating with him in a sound thrashing, had been locked up therein for atrociously presuming to be hungry, when Mrs. Mann, the good lady of the house, was unexpectedly startled by the apparition of Mr. Bumble, the beadle, striving to undo the wicket of the garden gate.

“AND now about business,” said the beadle, taking out a leathern pocket-book. “The child that was half-baptized ‘Oliver Twist,’ is nine year old to-day.”

“Bless him!” interposed Mrs. Mann, inflaming her left eye with the corner of her apron.

“And notwithstanding a offered reward of ten pound, which was afterward increased to twenty pound. Notwithstanding the most superlative, and I may say supernat’ral exertions on the part of this parish,” said Bumble, “we have never been able to discover who is his father, or what was his mother’s settlement, name, or con—dition.”

Mrs. Mann raised her hands in astonishment; but added, after a moment’s reflection, “How comes he to have any name at all, then?”

The beadle drew himself up with great pride, and said, “I invented it.”

“You, Mr. Bumble?”

“I, Mrs. Mann. We name our foundlings in alphabetical order. The last was a S—‘Swubble’ I named him. This was a T—‘Twist’ I named *him*. The next one as comes will be ‘Unwin,’ and the next ‘Vilkins.’ I have got names ready-made to the end of the alphabet, and all the way through it again, when we come to Z.”

“Why, you’re quite a literary character, sir!” said Mrs. Mann.

MR. FANG was a lean, long-backed, stiff-necked, middle-sized man, with no great quantity of hair, and what he had, growing on the back and sides of his head. His face was stern, and much flushed. If he were really not in the habit of drinking rather more than was exactly good for him, he might have brought an action against his countenance for libel, and have recovered heavy damages.

FROM OUR MUTUAL FRIEND.

THE existing R. Wilfer was a poor clerk. So poor a clerk, though having a limited salary and an unlimited family, that he had never yet attained the modest object of his ambition; which was, to wear a complete new suit of clothes, hat and boots included, at one time. His black hat was brown before he could afford a coat, his pantaloons were white at the seams and knees before he could buy a pair of boots, his boots had worn out before he could treat himself to new pantaloons, and, by the time he worked round to the hat again, that shining modern article roofed in an ancient ruin of various periods.

OF an ungainly make was Sloppy. Too much of him longwise, too little of him broadwise, and too many sharp angles of him anglewise. One of those shambling male human creatures, born to be indiscreetly candid in the revelation of buttons ; every button he had about him glaring at the public to a quite preternatural extent. A considerable capital of knee and elbow and wrist and ankle, had Sloppy, and he didn't know how to dispose of it to the best advantage, but was always investing it in wrong securities, and so getting himself into embarrassed circumstances. Full-Private Number One in the Awkward Squad of the rank and file of life, was Sloppy, and yet had his glimmering notions of standing true to the Colors.

WHETHER this young gentleman (for he was but three-and-twenty) combined with the miserly vice of an old man any of the open-handed vices of a young one, was a moot point ; so very honorably did he keep his own counsel. He was sensible of the value of appearances as an investment, and liked to dress well ; but he drove a bargain for every movable about him, from the coat on his back to the china on his breakfast table ; and every bargain, by representing somebody's ruin or somebody's loss, acquired a peculiar charm for him. It was a part of his avarice to take, within narrow bounds, long odds at races ; if he won, he drove harder bargains ; if he lost, he half starved himself until next time. Why money should be so precious to an Ass too dull and mean to exchange it for any other satisfaction, is strange : but there is no animal so sure to get laden with it, as the Ass who sees nothing written on the face of the earth and sky but the three letters L. S. D.—not Luxury, Sensuality, Dissoluteness, which they often stand for, but the three dry letters. Your concentrated Fox is seldom comparable to your concentrated Ass in money-breeding.

“**H**E’S enough to break his mother’s heart, is this boy,” said Miss Wren, half appealing to Eugene. “I wish I had never brought him up. He’d be sharper than a serpent’s tooth, if he wasn’t as dull as ditch water. Look at him. There’s a pretty object for a parent’s eyes !”

Assuredly, in his worse than swinish state (for swine at least fatten on their guzzling, and make themselves good to eat), he was a pretty object for any eyes.

“A muddling and a swipecy old child,” said Miss Wren, rating him with great severity, “fit for nothing but to be preserved in the liquor that destroys him, and put in a great glass bottle as a sight for other swipecy children of his own pattern,—if he has no consideration for his liver, has he none for his mother?”

FROM BLEAK HOUSE.

HOW Alexander wept when he had no more worlds to conquer, everybody knows—or has some reason to know by this time, the matter having been rather frequently mentioned. My Lady Dedlock, having conquered *her* world, fell, not into the melting, but rather into the freezing mood. An exhausted composure, a worn-out placidity, an equanimity of fatigue not to be ruffled by interest or satisfaction, are the trophies of her victory. She is perfectly well-bred. If she could be translated to Heaven to-morrow, she might be expected to ascend without any rapture.

MRS. JELLYBY had very good hair, but was too much occupied with her African duties to brush it. The shawl in which she had been loosely muffled, dropped on to her chair when she advanced to us ; and as she turned to resume her seat, we could not help noticing that her dress didn’t nearly

meet up the back, and that the open space was railed across with a lattice-work of stay-lace—like a summer-house.

“**S**HE is like the morning,” he said. “With that golden hair, those blue eyes, and that fresh bloom on her cheek, she is like the summer morning. The birds here will mistake her for it. We will not call such a lovely young creature as that, who is a joy to all mankind, an orphan. She is the child of the universe.

IN his lifetime, and likewise in the period of Snagsby’s “time” of seven long years, there dwelt with Peffer, in the same law-stationering premises, a niece—a short, shrewd niece, something too violently compressed about the waist, and with a sharp nose like a sharp autumn evening, inclining to be frosty towards the end. The Cook’s-Courtiers had a rumor flying among them, that the mother of this niece did, in her daughter’s childhood, moved by too jealous a solicitude that her figure should approach perfection, lace her up every morning with her maternal foot against the bedpost for a stronger hold and purchase; and further, that she exhibited internally pints of vinegar and lemon-juice: which acids, they held, had mounted to the nose and temper of the patient. With whichever of the many tongues of Rumor this frothy report originated, it either never reached, or never influenced, the ears of young Snagsby; who, having wooed and won its fair subject on his arrival at man’s estate, entered into two partnerships at once. So now, in Cook’s Court, Cursitor Street, Mr. Snagsby and the niece are one; and the niece still cherishes her figure—which, however tastes may differ, is unquestionably so far precious, that there is mighty little of it.

HE was a fat old gentleman with a false complexion, false teeth, false whiskers, and a wig. He had a fur collar, and he had a padded breast to his coat, which only wanted a

star or a broad blue ribbon to be complete. He was pinched in, and swelled out, and got up, and strapped down, as much as he could possibly bear. He had such a neckcloth on (puffing his very eyes out of their natural shape), and his chin, and even his ears so sunk into it, that it seemed as though he must inevitably double up, if it were cast loose. He had, under his arm, a hat of great size and weight, shelving downward from the crown to the brim; and in his hand a pair of white gloves, with which he flapped it, as he stood poised on one leg, in a high-shouldered, round-elbowed state of elegance not to be surpassed. He had a cane, he had an eye-glass, he had a snuff-box, he had rings, he had wristbands, he had everything but any touch of nature; he was not like youth, he was not like age, he was not like anything in the world but a model of Deportment.

THERE has been only one child in the Smallweed family for several generations. Little old men and women there have been, but no child, until Mr. Smallweed's grandmother, now living, became weak in her intellect, and fell (for the first time) into a childish state. With such infantine graces as a total want of observation, memory, understanding, and interest, and an eternal disposition to fall asleep over the fire and into it, Mr. Smallweed's grandmother has undoubtedly brightened the family.

Mr. Smallweed's grandfather is likewise of the party. He is in a helpless condition as to his lower, and nearly so as to his upper limbs; but his mind is unimpaired. It holds, as well as it ever held, the first four rules of arithmetic, and a certain small collection of the hardest facts. In respect of ideality, reverence, wonder, and other such phrenological attributes, it is no worse off than it used to be. Everything that Mr. Smallweed's grandfather ever put away in his mind, was a grub at first, and is a grub at last. In all his life he has never bred a single butterfly.

The father of this pleasant grandfather, of the neighborhood of Mount Pleasant, was a horny-skinned, two-legged, money-getting species of spider, who spun webs to catch unwary flies, and retired into holes until they were entrapped. The name of this old pagan's god was Compound Interest. He lived for it, married it, died of it. Meeting with a heavy loss in an honest little enterprise in which all the loss was intended to have been on the other side, he broke something—something necessary to his existence ; therefore it couldn't have been his heart—and made an end of his career. As his character was not good, and he had been bred at a Charity School, in a complete course, according to question and answer, of those ancient people, the Amorites and Hittites, he was frequently quoted as an example of the failure of education.

“**W**ELL, sir,” returns Mr. Snagsby, “you see my little woman is—not to put too fine a point upon it—inquisitive. She’s inquisitive. Poor little thing, she’s liable to spasms, and it’s good for her to have her mind employed. In consequence of which she employs it—I should say upon every individual thing she can lay hold of, whether it concerns her or not—especially not. My little woman has a very active mind, sir.”

JO is brought in. He is not one of Mrs. Pardiggle’s Tockahoopo Indians ; he is not one of Mrs. Jellyby’s lambs, being wholly unconnected with Borrioboola-Gha ; he is not softened by distance and unfamiliarity ; he is not a genuine foreign-grown savage ! he is the ordinary home-made article. Dirty, ugly, disagreeable to all the senses, in body a common creature of the common streets, only in soul a heathen. Homely filth begrimes him, homely parasites devour him, homely sores are in him, homely rags are on him : native ignorance, the growth of English soil and climate, sinks his im-

mortal nature lower than the beasts that perish. Stand forth, Jo, in uncompromising colors! From the sole of thy foot to the crown of thy head, there is nothing interesting about thee.

FROM LITTLE DORRIT.

THE colonel's son was Mrs. Merdle's only child. He was of a chuckle-headed, high-shouldered make, with the general appearance of being, not so much a young man as a swelled boy. He had given so few signs of reason, that a byword went among his companions that his brain had been frozen up in a mighty frost which prevailed at St. John's, New Brunswick, at the period of his birth there, and had never thawed from that hour. Another byword represented him as having in his infancy, through the negligence of a nurse, fallen out of a high window on his head, which had been heard by responsible witnesses to crack. It is probable that both these representations were of *ex post facto* origin, the young gentleman (whose expressive name was Sparkler) being monomaniacal in offering marriage to all manner of undesirable young ladies, and in remarking of every successive young lady to whom he tendered a matrimonial proposal that she was "a doosed fine gal—well educated too—with no biggodd nonsense about her."

WHAT Mr. Chivery thought of these things, or how much or how little he knew about them, was never gathered from himself. It has been already remarked that he was a man of few words; and it may be here observed, that he had imbibed a professional habit of locking everything up. He locked himself up as carefully as he locked up the Marshalsea debtors. Even his custom of bolting his meals may have been

a part of a uniform whole ; but there is no question, that, as to all other purposes, he kept his mouth as he kept the Marshalsea door. He never opened it without occasion. When it was necessary to let anything out, he opened it a little way, held it open just as long as sufficed for the purpose, and locked it again. Even as he would be sparing of his trouble at the Marshalsea door, and would keep a visitor who wanted to go out, waiting for a few moments if he saw another visitor coming down the yard, so that one turn of the key should suffice for both, similarly he would often reserve a remark if he perceived another on its way to his lips, and would deliver himself of the two together. As to any key to his inner knowledge being to be found in his face, the Marshalsea key was as legible an index to the individual characters and histories upon which it was turned.

ANYBODY may pass, any day, in the thronged thoroughfares of the metropolis, some meagre, wrinkled, yellow old man (who might be supposed to have dropped from the stars, if there were any star in the heavens dull enough to be suspected of casting off so feeble a spark), creeping along with a scared air, as though bewildered and a little frightened by the noise and bustle. This old man is always a little old man. If he were ever a big old man, he has shrunk into a little old man ; if he were always a little old man, he has dwindled into a less old man. His coat is of a color, and cut, that never was the mode anywhere, at any period. Clearly, it was not made for him, or for any individual mortal. Some wholesale contractor measured Fate for five thousand coats of such quality, and Fate has lent this old coat to this old man, as one of a long unfinished line of many old men. It has always large, dull, metal buttons, similar to no other buttons. This old man wears a hat, a thumbed and napless and yet an obdurate hat, which has never adapted itself to the shape of his poor head. His coarse shirt and his coarse neckcloth have no more indi-

viduality than his coat and hat ; they have the same character of not being his—of not being anybody's. Yet this old man wears these clothes with a certain unaccustomed air of being dressed and elaborated for the public ways ; as though he passed the greater part of his time in a nightcap and gown. And so, like the country mouse in the second year of a famine, come to see the town mouse, and timidly threading his way to the town-mouse's lodging through a city of cats, this old man passes in the streets.

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

IT is needless to multiply instances of the high and lofty station, and the vast importance of the Chuzzlewits, at different periods. If it came within the scope of reasonable probability that further proofs were required, they might be heaped upon each other until they formed an Alps of testimony, beneath which the boldest scepticism should be crushed and beaten flat. As a goodly tumulus is already collected, and decently battened up above the Family grave, the present chapter is content to leave it as it is ; merely adding, by way of a final spadeful, that many Chuzzlewits, both male and female, are proved to demonstration, on the faith of letters written by their own mothers, to have had chiselled noses, undeniable chins, forms that might have served the sculptor for a model, exquisitely-turned limbs, and polished foreheads of so transparent a texture that the blue veins might be seen branching off in various directions, like so many roads on an ethereal map.

HE was a most exemplary man ; fuller of virtuous precept than a copy-book. Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and

never goes there ; but these were his enemies ; the shadows cast by his brightness ; that was all. His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it. You looked over a very low fence of white cravat (whereof no man had ever beheld the tie, for he fastened it behind), and there it lay, a valley between two jutting heights of collar, serene and whiskerless before you. It seemed to say, on the part of Mr. Pecksniff, "There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen, all is peace, a holy calm pervades me." So did his hair, just grizzled with an iron-gray, which was all brushed off his forehead, and stood bolt upright, or slightly drooped in kindred action with his heavy eyelids. So did his person, which was sleek, though free from corpulency. So did his manner, which was soft and oily. In a word, even his plain black suit, and state of widower, and dangling double eye-glass, all tended to the same purpose, and cried aloud, "Behold the moral Pecksniff !"

The brazen plate upon the door (which being Mr. Pecksniff's, could not lie) bore this inscription, "PECKSNIFF, ARCHITECT," to which Mr. Pecksniff, on his cards of business, added, "AND LAND SURVEYOR." In one sense, and only one, he may be said to have been a Land Surveyor on a pretty large scale, as an extensive prospect lay stretched out before the windows of his house. Of his architectural doings, nothing was clearly known, except that he had never designed or built anything ; but it was generally understood that his knowledge of the science was almost awful in its profundity.

THE mistress of the Blue Dragon was in outward appearance just what a landlady should be : broad, buxom, comfortable, and good-looking, with a face of clear red and white, which, by its jovial aspect, at once bore testimony to her hearty participation in the good things of the larder and cellar, and to their thriving and healthful influences. She was a widow, but years ago had passed through her state of weeds,

and burst into flower again ; and in full bloom she had continued ever since ; and in full bloom she was now ; with roses on her ample skirts, and roses on her bodice, roses in her cap, roses in her cheeks,—ay, and roses, worth the gathering too, on her lips, for that matter. She had still a bright black eye, and jet black hair ; was comely, dimpled, plump, and tight as a gooseberry ; and though she was not exactly what the world calls young, you may make an affidavit, on trust, before any mayor or magistrate in Christendom, that there are a great many young ladies in the world (blessings on them one and all !) whom you wouldn't like half as well, or admire half as much, as the beaming hostess of the Blue Dragon.

FIRST there was Mr. Spottletoe, who was so bald, and had such big whiskers, that he seemed to have stopped his hair, by the sudden application of some powerful remedy, in the very act of falling off his head, and to have fastened it irrevocably on his face. Then there was Mrs. Spottletoe, who, being too slim for her years, and of a poetical constitution, was accustomed to inform her more intimate friends that the said whiskers were “the lodestar of her existence ;” and who could now, by reason of her strong affection for her uncle, Chuzzlewit, and the shock it gave her to be suspected of testamentary designs upon him, do nothing but cry—except moan. Then there were Anthony Chuzzlewit, and his son, Jonas : the face of the old man so sharpened by the wariness and cunning of his life, that it seemed to cut him a passage through the crowded room, as he edged away behind the remotest chairs ; while the son had so well profited by the precept and example of the father, that he looked a year or two the elder of the twain, as they stood, winking their red eyes, side by side, and whispering to each other softly. Then there was the widow of a deceased brother of Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit, who, being almost supernaturally disagreeable, and having a dreary face and a bony figure

and a masculine voice, was, in right of these qualities, what is commonly called a strong-minded woman ; and who, if she could, would have established her claim to the title, and have shown herself, mentally speaking, a perfect Samson, by shutting up her brother-in-law in a private mad-house until he proved his complete sanity by loving her very much. Beside her sat her spinster daughters, three in number, and of gentlemanly deportment, who had so mortified themselves with tight stays, that their tempers were reduced to something less than their waists, and sharp lacing was expressed in their very noses. Then there was a young gentleman, grand-nephew of Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit, very dark and very hairy, and apparently born for no particular purpose but to save looking-glasses the trouble of reflecting more than just the first idea and sketchy notion of a face, which had never been carried out. Then there was a solitary female cousin, who was remarkable for nothing but being very deaf, and living by herself, and always having the toothache. Then there was George Chuzzlewit, a gay bachelor cousin, who claimed to be young, but had been younger, and was inclined to corpulency, and rather overfed himself : to that extent, indeed, that his eyes were strained in their sockets, as if with constant surprise ; and he had such an obvious disposition to pimples, that the bright spots on his cravat, the rich pattern on his waistcoat, and even his glittering trinkets, seemed to have broken out upon him, and not to have come into existence comfortably. Last of all, there were present Mr. Chevy Slime and his friend, Tigg. And it is worthy of remark, that, although each person present disliked the other, mainly because he or she *did* belong to the family, they one and all concurred in hating Mr. Tigg because he didn't.

IF ever Mr. Pecksniff wore an apostolic look, he wore it on this memorable day. If ever his unruffled smile proclaimed the words, " I am a messenger of peace ! " that was its mission

now. If ever man combined within himself all the mild qualities of the lamb with a considerable touch of the dove, and not a dash of the crocodile, or the least possible suggestion of the very mildest seasoning of the serpent, that man was he. And oh, the two Miss Pecksniffs! Oh, the serene expression on the face of Charity, which seemed to say, "I know that all my family have injured me beyond the possibility of reparation, but I forgive them, for it is my duty so to do!" And, oh! the gay simplicity of Mercy, so charming, innocent, and infant-like, that if she had gone out walking by herself, and it had been a little earlier in the season, the robin-redbreasts might have covered her with leaves against her will, believing her to be one of the sweet children in the wood, come out of it, and issuing forth once more to look for blackberries, in the young freshness of her heart! What words can paint the Pecksniffs in that trying hour? Oh, none; for words have naughty company among them, and the Pecksniffs were all goodness.

IT was morning; and the beautiful Aurora, of whom so much hath been written, said, and sung, did, with her rosy fingers, nip and tweak Miss Pecksniff's nose. It was the frolicsome custom of the goddess, in her intercourse with the fair Cherry, so to do; or in more prosaic phrase, the tip of that feature in the sweet girl's countenance was always very red at breakfast-time. For the most part, indeed, it wore, at that season of the day, a scraped and frosty look, as if it had been rasped; while a similar phenomenon developed itself in her humor, which was then observed to be of a sharp and acid quality, as though an extra lemon (figuratively speaking) had been squeezed into the nectar of her disposition, and had rather damaged its flavor.

FROM THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD.

MR. GREWGIOUS had been well selected for his trust, as a man of incorruptible integrity, but certainly for no other appropriate quality discernible on the surface. He was an arid, sandy man, who, if he had been put into a grinding-mill, looked as if he would have ground immediately into high-dried snuff. He had a scanty flat crop of hair, in color and consistency like some very mangy yellow fur tippet ; it was so unlike hair, that it must have been a wig, but for the stupendous improbability of anybody's voluntarily sporting such a head. The little play of feature that his face presented was cut deep into it, in a few hard curves that made it more like work ; and he had certain notches in his forehead, which looked as though Nature had been about to touch them into sensibility or refinement, when she had impatiently thrown away the chisel, and said, "I really cannot be worried to finish off this man ; let him go as he is."

With too great length of throat at his upper end, and too much ankle-bone and heel at his lower ; with an awkward and hesitating manner ; with a shambling walk, and with what is called a near sight—which perhaps prevented his observing how much white-cotton stocking he displayed to the public eye, in contrast with his black suit—Mr. Grewgious still had some strange capacity in him of making, on the whole, an agreeable impression.

"**A**ND now, Mr. Jasper," resumes the auctioneer, producing his scrap of manuscript, "Mrs. Sapsea's monument having had full time to settle and dry, let me take your opinion, as a man of taste, on the inscription I have (as I before remarked, not without some little fever of the brow), drawn out for it. Take it in your own hand. The setting-out of the lines requires to be followed with the eye, as well as the contents with the mind."

Mr. Jasper complying, sees and reads as follows :

ETHELINDA,
 Reverential Wife of
 MR. THOMAS SAPSEA,
 AUCTIONEER, VALUER, ESTATE AGENT, ETC.,
 OF THIS CITY,
 Whose Knowledge of the World,
 Though somewhat extensive,
 Never brought him acquainted with
 A SPIRIT
 More capable of
 LOOKING UP TO HIM.
 STRANGER PAUSE
 And ask thyself the Question,
 CANST THOU DO LIKEWISE?
 If not,
 WITH A BLUSH RETIRE.

HE was getting very cold indeed, when he came upon a fragment of burial-ground, in which an unhappy sheep was grazing. Unhappy, because a hideous small boy was stoning it through the railings, and had already lamed it in one leg, and was much excited by the benevolent sportsman-like purpose of breaking its other three legs, and bringing it down.

"'It 'im agin!" cried the boy, as the poor creature leaped, "and made a dint in his wool."

"Let him be!" said Mr. Datchery. "Don't you see you have lamed him?"

"Yer lie," returned the sportsman. "'E went and lamed 'isself. I see 'im do it, and I giv' 'im a shy as a Widdy-warning to 'im not to go a-bruisin' 'is master's mutton any more."

"Come here."

"I won't; I'll come when yer can ketch me."

"Stay there, then, and show me which is Mr. Tope's."

"'Ow can I stay here and show you which is Topeseses, when Topeseses is t'other side the Kinfreederal, and over the

crossings, and round ever so many corners? Stoo-pid! Ya-a-ah!"

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

HE wore a sprinkling of powder upon his head, as if to make himself look benevolent; but if that were his purpose, he would perhaps have done better to powder his countenance also, for there was something in its very wrinkles, and in his cold, restless eye, which seemed to tell of cunning that would announce itself in spite of him.

IN obedience to this summons the clerk got off the high stool (to which he had communicated a high polish by countless gettings off and on), and presented himself in Mr. Nickleby's room. He was a tall man of middle age, with two goggle eyes whereof one was a fixture, a rubicund nose, a cadaverous face, and a suit of clothes (if the term be allowable when they suited him not at all) much the worse for wear, very much too small, and placed upon such a short allowance of buttons that it was marvellous how he contrived to keep them on.

MR. SQUEERS'S appearance was not prepossessing. He had but one eye, and the popular prejudice runs in favor of two. The eye he had was unquestionably useful, but decidedly not ornamental: being of a greenish gray, and in shape resembling the fan-light of a street-door. The blank side of his face was much wrinkled and puckered up, which gave him a very sinister appearance, especially when he smiled, at which times his expression bordered closely on the villanous. His hair was very flat and shiny, save at the ends, where it was

brushed stiffly up from a low, protruding forehead, which assorted well with his harsh voice and coarse manner. He was about two or three and fifty, and a trifle below the middle size ; he wore a white neckerchief with long ends, and a suit of scholastic black ; but his coat-sleeves being a great deal too long, and his trousers a great deal too short, he appeared ill at ease in his clothes, and as if he were in a perpetual state of astonishment at finding himself so respectable.

THEY had not been in this apartment a couple of minutes, when a female bounced into the room, and, seizing Mr. Squeers by the throat, gave him two loud kisses ; one close after the other, like a postman's knock. The lady, who was of a large, raw-boned figure, was about half a head taller than Mr. Squeers, and was dressed in a dimity night-jacket ; with her hair in papers ; she had also a dirty nightcap on, relieved by a yellow cotton handkerchief which tied it under the chin.

“How is my Squeery ?” asked this lady in a playful manner, and a very hoarse voice.

“Quite well, my love,” replied Squeers. “How's the cows ?”

“All right, every one of 'em,” answered the lady.

“And the pigs ?” said Squeers.

“As well as they were when you went away.”

“Come ; that's a blessing,” said Squeers, pulling off his great-coat.

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

“HERE'S my Am !” screamed Peggotty, “growed out of knowledge !”

He was waiting for us, in fact, at the public-house ; and asked me how I found myself, like an old acquaintance. I did not

feel, at first, that I knew him as well as he knew me, because he had never come to our house since the night I was born, and naturally he had the advantage of me. But our intimacy was much advanced by his taking me on his back to carry me home. He was now a huge, strong fellow of six feet high, broad in proportion, and round-shouldered; but with a simpering boy's face and curly light hair that gave him quite a sheepish look. He was dressed in a canvas jacket, and a pair of such very stiff trousers that they would have stood quite as well alone, without any legs in them. And you couldn't so properly have said he wore a hat, as that he was covered in a-top, like an old building, with something pitchy.

HAVING done the honors of his house in this hospitable manner, Mr. Peggotty went out to wash himself in a kettleful of hot water, remarking that "cold would never get *his* muck off." He soon returned, greatly improved in appearance; but so rubicund, that I couldn't help thinking his face had this in common with the lobsters, crabs, and crawfish—that it went into the hot water very black and came out very red.

ARRIVED at his house in Windsor Terrace (which I noticed was shabby like himself, but also, like himself, made all the show it could), he presented me to Mrs. Micawber, a thin and faded lady, not at all young, who was sitting in the parlor (the first floor was altogether unfurnished, and the blinds were kept down to delude the neighbors), with a baby at her breast. This baby was one of twins; and I may remark here that I hardly ever, in all my experience of the family, saw both the twins detached from Mrs. Micawber at the same time. One of them was always taking refreshment.

MY shoes were by this time in a woful condition. The soles had shed themselves bit by bit, and the upper leathers had broken and burst until the very shape and form

of shoes had departed from them. My hat (which had served me for a nightcap, too) was so crushed and bent, that no old, battered, handleless saucepan on a dunghill need have been ashamed to vie with it. My shirt and trousers, stained with heat, dew, grass, and the Kentish soil on which I had slept—and torn besides—might have frightened the birds from my aunt's garden, as I stood at the gate. My hair had known no comb or brush since I left London. My face, neck, and hands, from unaccustomed exposure to the air and sun, were burnt to a berry-brown. From head to foot I was powdered almost as white with chalk and dust, as if I had come out of a limekiln. In this plight, and with a strong consciousness of it, I waited to introduce myself to, and make my first impression on, my formidable aunt.

DOCTOR STRONG looked almost as rusty, to my thinking, as the tall iron rails and gates outside the house ; and almost as stiff and heavy as the great stone urns that flanked them, and were set up, on the top of the red-brick wall, at regular distances all round the court, like sublimated skittles, for Time to play at. He was in his library (I mean Doctor Strong was), with his clothes not particularly well brushed, and his hair not particularly well combed ; his knee-smalls unbraced ; his long black gaiters unbuttoned ; and his shoes yawning like two caverns on the hearth-rug. Turning upon me a lustreless eye, that reminded me of a long-forgotten blind old horse who once used to crop the grass, and tumble over the graves, in Blunderstone churchyard, he said he was glad to see me ; and then he gave me his hand ; which I didn't know what to do with, as it did nothing for itself.

“ I AM well aware that I am the umblest person going,” said Uriah Heep, modestly ; “ let the other be where he may. My mother is likewise a very umble person. We

live in a numble abode, Master Copperfield, but have much to be thankful for. My father's former calling was umble. He was a sexton."

"What is he now?" I asked.

"He is a partaker of glory at present, Master Copperfield."

SOME of the higher scholars boarded in the Doctor's house, and through them I learned, at second-hand, some particulars of the Doctor's history. As, how he had not yet been married twelve months to the beautiful young lady I had seen in the study, whom he had married for love; for she had not a sixpence, and had a world of poor relations (so our fellows said) ready to swarm the Doctor out of house and home. Also, how the Doctor's cogitating manner was attributable to his being always engaged in looking out for Greek roots; which, in my innocence and ignorance, I supposed to be a botanical furore on the Doctor's part, especially as he always looked at the ground when he walked about, until I understood that they were roots of words, with a view to a new Dictionary which he had in contemplation. Adams, our head-boy, who had a turn for mathematics, had made a calculation, I was informed, of the time this Dictionary would take in completing, on the Doctor's plan, and at the Doctor's rate of going. He considered that it might be done in one thousand six hundred and forty-nine years, counting from the Doctor's last, or sixty-second birthday.

I LOOKED at the doorway and saw nothing. I was still looking at the doorway, thinking that Miss Mowcher was a long while making her appearance, when, to my infinite astonishment, there came waddling round a sofa which stood between me and it, a pursy dwarf, of about forty or forty-five, with a very large head and face, a pair of roguish gray eyes, and such extremely little arms, that, to enable herself to lay a

finger archly against her snub nose as she ogled Steerforth, she was obliged to meet the finger half way, and lay her nose against it. Her chin, which was what is called a double-chin, was so fat that it entirely swallowed up the strings of her bonnet, bow and all. Throat she had none ; waist she had none ; legs she had none, worth mentioning ; for though she was more than full-sized down to where her waist would have been, if she had had any, and though she terminated, as human beings generally do, in a pair of feet, she was so short that she stood at a common-sized chair as at a table, resting a bag she carried on the seat. This lady ; dressed in an off-hand, easy style ; bringing her nose and her forefinger together, with the difficulty I have described ; standing with her head necessarily on one side, and, with one of her sharp eyes shut up, making an uncommonly knowing face ; after ogling Steerforth for a few moments, broke into a torrent of words.

THERE was a servant in that house, a man who, I understood, was usually with Steerforth, and had come into his service at the University, who was in appearance a pattern of respectability. I believe there never existed in his station a more respectable-looking man. He was taciturn, soft-footed, very quiet in his manner, deferential, observant, always at hand when wanted, and never near when not wanted ; but his great claim to consideration was his respectability. He had not a pliant face, he had rather a stiff neck, rather a tight, smooth head with short hair clinging to it at the sides, a soft way of speaking, with a peculiar habit of whispering the letter S so distinctly, that he seemed to use it oftener than any other man ; but every peculiarity that he had he made respectable. If his nose had been upside down, he would have made that respectable. He surrounded himself with an atmosphere of respectability, and walked secure in it. It would have been next to impossible to suspect him of anything wrong, he was so thoroughly respectable. Nobody could have thought of putting

him in a livery, he was so highly respectable. To have imposed any derogatory work upon him, would have been to inflict a wanton insult on the feelings of a most respectable man. And of this, I noticed the women-servants in the household were so intuitively conscious, that they always did such work themselves, and generally while he read the paper by the pantry fire.

Such a self-contained man I never saw. But in that quality, as in every other he possessed, he only seemed to be the more respectable. Even the fact that no one knew his Christian name, seemed to form a part of his respectability. Nothing could be objected against his surname, Littimer, by which he was known. Peter might have been hanged, or Tom transported ; but Littimer was perfectly respectable.

AGNES had no time to say more, for the room-door opened, and Mrs. Waterbrook, who was a large lady—or who wore a large dress : I don't exactly know which, for I don't know which was dress and which was lady—came sailing in. I had a dim recollection of having seen her at the theatre, as if I had seen her in a pale magic lantern ; but she appeared to remember me perfectly, and still to suspect me of being in a state of intoxication.

IF I went to sleep for a few moments, the image of Agnes with her tender eyes, and of her father looking fondly on her, as I had so often seen him look, arose before me with appealing faces, and filled me with vague terrors. When I awoke, the recollection that Uriah was lying in the next room, sat heavy on me like a waking nightmare ; and oppressed me with a leaden dread, as if I had had some meaner quality of devil for a lodger.

The poker got into my dozing thoughts besides, and

wouldn't come out. I thought, between sleeping and waking, that it was still red-hot, and I had snatched it out of the fire, and run him through the body. I was so haunted at last by the idea, though I knew there was nothing in it, that I stole into the next room to look at him. There I saw him, lying on his back, with his legs extending to I don't know where, gurglings taking place in his throat, stoppages in his nose, and his mouth open like a post-office. He was so much worse in reality than in my distempered fancy, that afterwards I was attracted to him in very repulsion, and could not help wandering in and out every half hour or so, and taking another look at him. Still, the long long night seemed heavy and hopeless as ever, and no promise of day was in the murky sky.

When I saw him going downstairs early in the morning (for, thank Heaven ! he would not stay to breakfast), it appeared to me as if the night was going away in his person. When I went out to the Commons, I charged Mrs. Crupp with particular directions to leave the windows open, that my sitting-room might be aired, and purged of his presence.

I DOUBT whether two young birds could have known less about keeping house, than I and my pretty Dora did. We had a servant, of course. She kept house for us. I have still a latent belief that she must have been Mrs. Crupp's daughter in disguise, we had such an awful time of it with Mary Anne.

Her name was Paragon. Her nature was represented to us, when we engaged her, as being feebly expressed in her name. She had a written character as large as a proclamation ; and, according to this document, could do everything of a domestic nature that ever I heard of, and a great many things that I never did hear of. She was a woman in the prime of life ; of a severe countenance ; and subject (particularly in the arms) to a sort of perpetual measles or fiery rash. She had a cousin in the Life Guards, with such long legs that he looked

like the afternoon shadow of somebody else. His shell-jacket was as much too little for him as he was too big for the premises. He made the cottage smaller than it need have been, by being so very much out of proportion to it. Besides which, the walls were not thick, and whenever he passed the evening at our house, we always knew of it by hearing one continual growl in the kitchen.

Our treasure was warranted sober and honest. I am therefore willing to believe that she was in a fit when we found her under the boiler, and that the deficient teaspoons were attributable to the dustman.

But she preyed upon our minds dreadfully. We felt our inexperience, and were unable to help ourselves. We should have been at her mercy, if she had had any; but she was a remorseless woman, and had none. She was the cause of our first little quarrel.

THE next domestic trial we went through, was the Ordeal of Servants. Mary Anne's cousin deserted into our coal-hole, and was brought out, to our great amazement, by a piquet of his companions in arms, who took him away handcuffed in a procession that covered our front-garden with ignominy. This nerved me to get rid of Mary Anne, who went so mildly, on receipt of wages, that I was surprised, until I found out about the teaspoons, and also about the little sums she had borrowed in my name of the tradespeople without authority. After an interval of Mrs. Kidgerbury—the oldest inhabitant of Kentish Town, I believe, who went out charing, but was too feeble to execute her conceptions of that art—we found another treasure, who was one of the most amiable of women, but who generally made a point of falling either up or down the kitchen stairs with the tray, and almost plunged into the parlor, as into a bath, with the tea-things. The ravages committed by this unfortunate rendering her dismissal necessary, she was succeeded (with intervals of Mrs. Kidgerbury) by

a long line of Incapables ; terminating in a young person of genteel appearance, who went to Greenwich Fair in Dora's bonnet.

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

THE looker-on was a round, red-faced, sturdy yeoman, with a double chin, and a voice husky with good living, good sleeping, good-humor, and good health. He was past the prime of life, but Father Time is not always a hard parent, and, though he tarries for none of his children, often lays his hand lightly upon those who have used him well ; making them old men and women inexorably enough, but leaving their hearts and spirits young and in full vigor. With such people the gray head is but the impression of the old fellow's hand in giving them his blessing, and every wrinkle but a notch in the quiet calendar of a well-spent life.

SIM, as he was called in the locksmith's family, or Mr. Simon Tappertit, as he called himself, and required all men to style him out of doors, on holidays, and Sundays out—was an old-fashioned, thin-faced, sleek-haired, sharp-nosed, small-eyed little fellow, very little more than five feet high, and thoroughly convinced in his own mind that he was above the middle size ; rather tall, in fact, than otherwise. Of his figure, which was well enough formed, though somewhat of the leanest, he entertained the highest admiration ; and with his legs, which, in knee-breeches, were perfect curiosities of littleness, he was enraptured to a degree amounting to enthusiasm. He also had some majestic, shadowy ideas, which had never been quite fathomed by his intimate friends, concerning the power of his eye. Indeed he had been known to go so far as to boast that he could utterly quell and subdue the haughtiest beauty by a

simple process, which he termed "eying her over ;" but it must be added, that neither of this faculty, nor of the power he claimed to have, through the same gift, of vanquishing and heaving down dumb animals, even in a rabid state, had he ever furnished evidence which could be deemed quite satisfactory and conclusive.

It may be inferred from these premises, that in the small body of Mr. Tappertit there was locked up an ambitious and aspiring soul. As certain liquors, confined in casks too cramped in their dimensions, will ferment, and fret, and chafe in their imprisonment, so the spiritual essence or soul of Mr. Tappertit would sometimes fume within that precious cask, his body, until, with great foam and froth and splutter, it would force a vent, and carry all before it. It was his custom to remark, in reference to any one of these occasions, that his soul had got into his head ; and in this novel kind of intoxication, many scrapes and mishaps befell him, which he had frequently concealed with no small difficulty from his worthy master.

THE widow, to whom each painful mile seemed longer than the last, toiled wearily along ; while Barnaby, yielding to every inconstant impulse, fluttered here and there, now leaving her far behind, now lingering far behind himself, now darting into some by-lane or path and leaving her to pursue her way alone, until he stealthily emerged again and came upon her with a wild shout of merriment, as his wayward and capricious nature prompted. Now he would call to her from the topmost branch of some high tree by the roadside ; now, using his tall staff as a leaping-pole, come flying over ditch or hedge or five-barred gate ; now run with surprising swiftness for a mile or more on the straight road, and halting, sport upon a patch of grass with Grip till she came up. These were his delights ; and when his patient mother heard his merry voice, or looked into his flushed and healthy face, she would not have abated them by one sad word or murmur, though each had

been to her a source of suffering in the same degree as it was to him of pleasure.

It is something to look upon enjoyment, so that it be free and wild and in the face of nature, though it is but the enjoyment of an idiot. It is something to know that Heaven has left the capacity of gladness in such a creature's breast ; it is something to be assured that, however lightly men may crush that faculty in their fellows, the Great Creator of mankind imparts it even to His despised and slighted work. Who would not rather see a poor idiot happy in the sunlight, than a wise man pining in a darkened jail !

Ye men of gloom and austerity, who paint the face of Infinite Benevolence with an eternal frown ; read in the Everlasting Book, wide open to your view, the lesson it would teach. Its pictures are not in black and sombre hues, but bright and glowing tints ; its music—save when ye drown it—is not in sighs and groans, but songs and cheerful sounds. Listen to the million voices in the summer air, and find one dismal as your own. Remember, if ye can, the sense of hope and pleasure which every glad return of day awakens in the breast of all your kind who have not changed their nature ; and learn some wisdom even from the witless, when their hearts are lifted up they know not why, by all the mirth and happiness it brings.

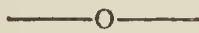
THIS Lion or landlord—for he was called both man and beast, by reason of his having instructed the artist who painted his sign, to convey into the features of the lordly brute whose effigy it bore, as near a counterpart of his own face as his skill could compass and devise—was a gentleman almost as quick of apprehension, and of almost as subtle a wit, as the mighty John himself. But the difference between them lay in this : that whereas Mr. Willet's extreme sagacity and acuteness were the efforts of unassisted nature, the Lion stood indebted, in no small amount, to beer ; of which he swigged such copious draughts, that most of his faculties were utterly drowned and

washed away, except the one great faculty of sleep, which he retained in surprising perfection. The creaking Lion over the house-door was, therefore, to say the truth, rather a drowsy, tame, and feeble lion ; and as these social representatives of a savage class are usually of a conventional character (being depicted, for the most part, in impossible attitudes and of unearthly colors) he was frequently supposed by the more ignorant and uninformed among the neighbors, to be the veritable portrait of the host as he appeared on the occasion of some great funeral ceremony or public mourning.

LORD GEORGE GORDON, the lord, the great personage, who did the Maypole so much honor, was about the middle height, of a slender make and sallow complexion, with an aquiline nose, and long hair of a reddish brown, combed perfectly straight and smooth about his ears, and slightly powdered, but without the faintest vestige of a curl. He was attired, under his great-coat, in a full suit of black, quite free from any ornament, and of the most precise and sober cut. The gravity of his dress, together with a certain lankness of cheek and stiffness of deportment, added nearly ten years to his age, but his figure was that of one not yet past thirty. As he stood musing in the red glow of the fire, it was striking to observe his very bright large eye, which betrayed a restlessness of thought and purpose, singularly at variance with the studied composure and sobriety of his mien, and with his quaint and sad apparel. It had nothing harsh or cruel in its expression ; neither had his face, which was thin and mild, and wore an air of melancholy ; but it was suggestive of an indefinable uneasiness, which infected those who looked upon him, and filled them with a kind of pity for the man : though why it did so, they would have had some trouble to explain.

THIS gentleman had an overhanging brow, great hands and feet and ears, and a pair of eyes that seemed to have made an unnatural retreat into his head, and to have dug themselves

a cave to hide in. His manner was smooth and humble, but very sly and slinking. He wore the aspect of a man who was always lying in wait for something that *wouldn't* come to pass ; but he looked patient—very patient—and fawned like a spaniel dog. Even now, while he warmed and rubbed his hands before the blaze, he had the air of one who only presumed to enjoy it in his degree as a commoner ; and though he knew his lord was not regarding him, he looked into his face from time to time, and, with a meek and deferential manner, smiled as if for practice.

DESCRIPTIONS OF PLACES AND
THINGS.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

“YON’S our house, Mas’r Davy !”

I looked in all directions, as far as I could stare over the wilderness, and away at the sea, and away at the river, but no house could I make out. There was a black barge, or some other kind of superannuated boat, not far off, high and dry on the ground, with an iron funnel sticking out of it for a chimney and smoking very cosily ; but nothing else in the way of a habitation that was visible to *me*.

“That’s not it ?” said I. “That ship-looking thing ?”

“That’s it, Mas’r David,” returned Ham.

If it had been Aladdin’s palace, roc’s egg and all, I suppose I could not have been more charmed with the romantic idea of living in it. There was a delightful door cut in the side, and it was roofed in, and there were little windows in it ; but the wonderful charm of it was, that it was a real boat which had no doubt been upon the water hundreds of times, and which had never been intended to be lived in, on dry land. That was the captivation of it to me. If it had ever been meant to be lived in, I might have thought it small, or inconvenient, or lonely ; but never having been designed for any such use, it became a perfect abode.

It was beautifully clean inside, and as tidy as possible.

There was a table, and a Dutch clock, and a chest of drawers, and on the chest of drawers there was a tea-tray with a painting on it of a lady with a parasol, taking a walk with a military-looking child who was trundling a hoop. The tray was kept from tumbling down, by a Bible : and the tray, if it had tumbled down, would have smashed a quantity of cups and saucers and a teapot that were grouped around the book. On the walls there were some common colored pictures, framed and glazed, of Scripture subjects ; such as I have never seen since in the hands of pedlers, without seeing the whole interior of Peggotty's brother's house again, at one view. Abraham in red going to sacrifice Isaac in blue, and Daniel in yellow cast into a den of green lions, were the most prominent of these. Over the little mantel-shelf, was a picture of the Sarah Jane lugger, built at Sunderland, with a real little wooden stern stuck on to it ; a work of art, combining composition with carpentry, which I considered to be one of the most enviable possessions that the world could afford. There were some hooks in the beams of the ceiling, the use of which I did not divine then ; and some lockers and boxes and conveniences of that sort, which served for seats and eked out the chairs.

THE walls were whitewashed as white as milk, and the patchwork counterpane made my eyes quite ache with its brightness. One thing I particularly noticed in this delightful house, was the smell of fish ; which was so searching, that when I took out my pocket-handkerchief to wipe my nose, I found it smell exactly as if it had wrapped up a lobster. On my imparting this discovery in confidence to Peggotty, she informed me that her brother dealt in lobsters, crabs, and crawfish ; and I afterwards found that a heap of these creatures, in a state of wonderful conglomeration with one another, and never leaving off pinching whatever they laid hold of, were usually to be found in a little wooden outhouse where the pots and kettles were kept.

BUT I am afraid I had a supreme satisfaction, of a personal and professional nature, in taking charge of Mr. Barkis's will, and expounding its contents.

I may claim the merit of having originated the suggestion that the will should be looked for in the box. After some search, it was found in the box, at the bottom of a horse's nose-bag ; wherein (besides hay) there was discovered an old gold watch, with chain and seals, which Mr. Barkis had worn on his wedding-day, and which had never been seen before or since ; a silver tobacco-stopper, in the form of a leg ; an imitation lemon, full of minute cups and saucers, which I have some idea Mr. Barkis must have purchased to present to me when I was a child, and afterwards found himself unable to part with : eighty-seven guineas and a half, in guineas and half-guineas ; two hundred and ten pounds, in perfectly clean Bank notes ; certain receipts for Bank of England stock ; an old horse-shoe, a bad shilling, a piece of camphor, and an oyster-shell. From the circumstance of the latter article having been much polished, and displaying prismatic colors on the inside, I conclude that Mr. Barkis had some general ideas about pearls, which never resolved themselves into anything definite.

For years and years, Mr. Barkis had carried this box, on all his journeys, every day. That it might the better escape notice, he had invented a fiction that it belonged to "Mr. Blackboy," and was "to be left with Barkis till called for ;" a fable he had elaborately written on the lid, in characters now scarcely legible.

EXCELLENT fellow as I knew Traddles to be, and warmly attached to him as I was, I could not help wishing, on that delicate occasion, that he had never contracted the habit of brushing his hair so very upright. It gave him a surprised look—not to say a hearth-broomy kind of expression—which, my apprehensions whispered, might be fatal to us.

I took the liberty of mentioning it to Traddles, as we were walking to Putney ; and saying that if he *would* smooth it down a little—

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, lifting off his hat, and rubbing his hair all kinds of ways, "nothing would give me greater pleasure. But it won't."

"Won't be smoothed down?" said I.

"No," said Traddles. "Nothing will induce it. If I was to carry a half-hundredweight upon it, all the way to Putney, it would be up again the moment the weight was taken off. You have no idea what obstinate hair mine is, Copperfield. I am quite a fretful porcupine."

I was a little disappointed, I must confess, but thoroughly charmed by his good-nature too. I told him how I esteemed his good-nature; and said that his hair must have taken all the obstinacy out of his character, for *he* had none.

"Oh!" returned Traddles, laughing. "I assure you, it's quite an old story, my unfortunate hair. My uncle's wife couldn't bear it. She said it exasperated her. It stood very much in my way, too, when I first fell in love with Sophy. Very much!"

"Did she object to it?"

"*She* didn't," rejoined Traddles; "but her eldest sister—the one that's the Beauty—quite made game of it, I understand. In fact, all the sisters laugh at it."

"Agreeable!" said I.

"Yes," returned Traddles with perfect innocence, "it's a joke for us. They pretend that Sophy has a lock of it in her desk, and is obliged to shut it in a clasped book, to keep it down. We laugh about it."

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

AS this fair matron sat beside the fire, she glanced occasionally, with all the pride of ownership, about the room, which was a large apartment, such as one may see in country

places, with a low roof and a sunken flooring, all down-hill from the door, and a descent of two steps on the inside so exquisitely unexpected, that strangers, despite the most elaborate cautioning, usually dived in head-first, as into a plunging-bath. It was none of your frivolous and preposterously bright bedrooms, where nobody can close an eye with any kind of propriety or decent regard to the associations of ideas ; but it was a good, dull, leaden, drowsy place, where every article of furniture reminded you that you came there to sleep, and that you were expected to go to sleep. There was no wakeful reflection of the fire there, as in your modern chambers, which upon the darkest nights have a watchful consciousness of French polish ; the old Spanish mahogany winked at it now and then, as a dozing cat or dog might, nothing more. The very size and shape, and hopeless immovability, of the bedstead and wardrobe, and in a minor degree of even the chairs and tables, provoked sleep ; they were plainly apoplectic, and disposed to snore.

There were no staring portraits to remonstrate with you for being lazy ; no round-eyed birds upon the curtains, disgustingly wide-awake, and insufferably prying. The thick neutral hangings, and the dark blinds, and the heavy heap of bedclothes, were all designed to hold in sleep, and act as non-conductors to the day and getting up. Even the old stuffed fox upon the top of the wardrobe was devoid of any spark of vigilance, for his glass eye had fallen out, and he slumbered as he stood.

THE chairs in Mrs. Gamp's apartment were extremely large and broad-backed, which was more than a sufficient reason for there being but two in number. They were both elbow-chairs, of ancient mahogany, and were chiefly valuable for the slippery nature of their seats, which had been originally horse-hair, but were now covered with a shiny substance of a bluish tint, from which the visitors began to slide away with a dismayed countenance, immediately after sitting down. What

Mrs. Gamp wanted in chairs she made up in bandboxes, of which she had a great collection, devoted to the reception of various miscellaneous valuables, which were not, however, as well protected as the good woman, by a pleasant fiction, seemed to think ; for, though every bandbox had a carefully closed lid, not one among them had a bottom ; owing to which cause, the property within was merely, as it were, extinguished. The chest of drawers having been originally made to stand upon the top of another chest, had a dwarfish, elfin look, alone ; but in regard of its security it had a great advantage over the bandboxes, for as all the handles had been long ago pulled off, it was very difficult to get at its contents. This indeed was only to be done by one of two devices ; either by tilting the whole structure forward until all the drawers fell out together, or by opening them singly with knives, like oysters.

Mrs. Gamp stored all her household matters in a little cupboard by the fireplace ; beginning below the surface (as in nature) with the coals, and mounting gradually upwards to the spirits, which, from motives of delicacy, she kept in a tea-pot. The chimney-piece was ornamented with a small almanac ; marked here and there in Mrs. Gamp's own hand, with a memorandum of the date at which some lady was expected to fall due. It was also embellished with three profiles : one, in colors, of Mrs. Gamp herself in early life ; one, in bronze, of a lady in feathers, supposed to be Mrs. Harris, as she appeared when dressed for a ball ; and one, in black, of Mr. Gamp, deceased. The last was a full-length, in order that the likeness might be rendered more obvious and forcible, by the introduction of the wooden leg.

A pair of bellows, a pair of pattens, a toasting-fork, a kettle, a pap-boat, a spoon for the administration of medicine to the refractory, and lastly, Mrs. Gamp's umbrella, which, as something of great price and rarity, was displayed with particular ostentation, completed the decorations of the chimney piece and adjacent wall. Towards these objects Mrs. Gamp raised her eyes in satisfaction when she had arranged the tea-board,

and had concluded her arrangements for the reception of Betsey Prig, even unto the setting forth of two pounds of Newcastle salmon, intensely pickled.

FROM LITTLE DORRIT.

THE furniture, at once spare and lumbering, hid in the rooms rather than furnished them, and there was no color in all the house ; such color as had ever been there, had long ago started away on lost sunbeams—got itself absorbed, perhaps, into flowers, butterflies, plumage of birds, precious stones, what not. There was not one straight floor, from the foundation to the roof ; the ceilings were so fantastically clouded by smoke and dust, that old women might have told fortunes in them, better than in grouts of tea ; the dead-cold hearths showed no traces of having ever been warmed, but in heaps of soot that had tumbled down the chimneys, and eddied about in little dusky whirlwinds when the doors were opened. In what had once been a drawing-room, there were a pair of meagre mirrors, with dismal processions of black figures carrying black garlands, walking round the frames ; but even these were short of heads and legs, and one undertaker-like cupid had swung round on his own axis and got upside down, and another had fallen off altogether.

A GREAT white cap, with a quantity of opaque frilling that was always flapping about, apologized for Maggy's baldness, and made it so very difficult for her old black bonnet to retain its place upon her head, that it held on round her neck like a gypsy's baby. A commission of haberdashers could alone have reported what the rest of her poor dress was made of ; but it had a strong general resemblance to sea-weed,

with here and there a gigantic tea-leaf. Her shawl looked particularly like a tea-leaf, after long infusion.

THIS great and fortunate man had provided that extensive bosom, which required so much room to be unfeeling enough in, with a nest of crimson and gold some fifteen years before. It was not a bosom to repose upon, but it was a capital bosom to hang jewels upon. Mr. Merdle wanted something to hang jewels upon, and he bought it for the purpose. Storr and Mortimer might have married on the same speculation.

Like all his other speculations, it was sound and successful. The jewels shone to the richest advantage. The bosom, moving in Society with the jewels displayed upon it, attracted general admiration.

FROM 'BARNABY RUDGE.'

IT was spacious enough in all conscience, occupying the whole depth of the house, and having at either end a great bay-window, as large as many modern rooms ; in which some few panes of stained glass, emblazoned with fragments of armorial bearings, though cracked, and patched, and shattered, yet remained ; attesting, by their presence, that the former owner had made the very light subservient to his state, and pressed the sun itself into his list of flatterers ; bidding it, when it shone into his chamber, reflect the badges of his ancient family, and take new hues and colors from their pride.

But those were old days, and now every little ray came and went as it would ; telling the plain, bare, searching truth.

IT came on darker and darker. The old-fashioned furniture of the chamber, which was a kind of hospital for all the invalided movables in the house, grew indistinct and

shadowy in its many shapes ; chairs and tables, which by day were as honest cripples as need be, assumed a doubtful and mysterious character ; and one old leprous screen of faded India leather and gold binding, which had kept out many a cold breath of air in days of yore and shut in many a jolly face, frowned on him with a spectral aspect, and stood at full height in its allotted corner, like some gaunt ghost who waited to be questioned. A portrait opposite the window—a queer, old gray-eyed general, in an oval frame—seemed to wink and doze as the light decayed, and at length, when the last faint glimmering speck of day went out, to shut its eyes in good earnest, and fall sound asleep. There was such a hush and mystery about everything, that Joe could not help following its example ; and so went off into a slumber likewise, and dreamed of Dolly, till the clock of Chigwell church struck two.

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

THE room in which the boys were fed, was a large stone hall, with a copper at one end : out of which the master, dressed in an apron for the purpose, and assisted by one or two women, ladled the gruel at meal-times. Of this festive composition, each boy had one porringer, and no more—except on occasions of great public rejoicing, when he had two ounces and a quarter of bread besides. The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again ; and when they had performed this operation (which never took very long, the spoons being nearly as large as the bowls), they would sit staring at the copper, with such eager eyes, as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed ; employing themselves, meanwhile, in sucking their fingers most assiduously, with a view of catching up any stray splashes of gruel that

might have been cast thereon. Boys have generally excellent appetites. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered the tortures of slow starvation for three months : at last they got so voracious and wild with hunger, that one boy, who was tall for his age, and hadn't been used to that sort of thing (for his father had kept a small cook's shop), hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of gruel *per diem*, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next him, who happened to be a weakly youth of tender age. He had a wild, hungry eye ; and they implicitly believed him. A council was held ; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more ; and it fell to Oliver Twist.

FROM BLEAK HOUSE.

IT was a picturesque old house, in a fine park richly wooded. Among the trees, and not far from the residence, he pointed out the spire of the little church of which he had spoken. O, the solemn woods over which the light and shadow travelled swiftly, as if heavenly wings were sweeping on benignant errands through the summer air ; the smooth green slopes, the glittering water, the garden where the flowers were so symmetrically arranged in clusters of the richest colors, how beautiful they looked ! The house, with gable and chimney, and tower, and turret, and dark doorway, and broad terrace-walk, twining among the balustrades of which, and lying heaped upon the vases, there was one great flush of roses, seemed scarcely real in its light solidity, and in the serene and peaceful hush that rested on all around it. To Ada and to me, that, above all, appeared the pervading influence. On everything, house, garden, terrace, green slopes, water, old oaks, fern, moss, woods again, and far away across the openings in

the prospect, to the distance lying wide before us with a purple bloom upon it, there seemed to be such undisturbed repose.

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

THE fowls who peck about the kennels, jerking their bodies hither and thither with a gait which none but town fowls are ever seen to adopt, and which any country cock or hen would be puzzled to understand, are perfectly in keeping with the crazy habitations of their owners. Dingy, ill-plumed, drowsy flutterers, sent, like many of the neighboring children, to get a livelihood in the streets, they hop, from stone to stone, in forlorn search of some hidden eatable in the mud, and can scarcely raise a crow among them. The only one with anything approaching to a voice, is an aged bantam at the baker's ; and even he is hoarse, in consequence of bad living in his last place.

REFLECTIONS.



CHAPTER V.

FROM THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

IN the majority of cases, conscience is an elastic and very flexible article, which will bear a deal of stretching and adapt itself to a great variety of circumstances. Some people by prudent management and leaving it off piece by piece, like a flannel waistcoat in warm weather, even contrive, in time, to dispense with it altogether ; but there be others who can assume the garment and throw it off at pleasure ; and this, being the greatest and most convenient improvement, is the one most in vogue.

WE call this a state of childishness, but it is the same poor hollow mockery of it, that death is of sleep. Where, in the dull eyes of doting men, are the laughing light and life of childhood, the gayety that has known no check, the frankness that has felt no chill, the hope that has never withered, the joys that fade in blossoming ? Where, in the sharp lineaments of rigid and unsightly death, is the calm beauty of slumber, telling of rest for the waking hours that are past, and gentle hopes and loves for those which are to come ? Lay death and sleep down, side by side, and say who shall find the two akin. Send forth the child and childish man together, and blush for the pride that libels our own old happy state, and gives its title to an ugly and distorted image.

WHY is it that we can better bear to part in spirit than in body, and while we have the fortitude to act farewell have not the nerve to say it? On the eve of long voyages or an absence of many years, friends who are tenderly attached will separate with the usual look, the usual pressure of the hand, planning one final interview for the morrow, while each one knows that it is but a poor feint to save the pain of uttering that one word, and that the meeting will never be. Should possibilities be worse to bear than certainties? We do not shun our dying friends; the not having distinctly taken leave of one among them, whom we left in all kindness and affection, will often embitter the whole remainder of a life.

AND let me linger in this place, for an instant, to remark, if ever household affections and loves are graceful things, they are graceful in the poor. The ties that bind the wealthy and the proud to home may be forged on earth, but those which link the poor man to his humble hearth are of the truer metal and bear the stamp of Heaven. The man of high descent may love the halls and lands of his inheritance as a part of himself; as trophies of his birth and power; his associations with them are associations of pride and wealth and triumph; the poor man's attachment to the tenements he holds, which strangers have held before, and may to-morrow occupy again, as a worthier root, struck deep into a purer soil. His household gods are of flesh and blood, with no alloy of silver, gold, or precious stone: he has no property but in the affections of his own heart; and when they endear bare floors and walls, despite of rags and toil and scanty fare, that man has his love of home from God, and his rude hut becomes a solemn place.

Oh! if those who rule the destinies of nations would but remember this—if they would but think how hard it is for the very poor to have engendered in their hearts that love of home from which all domestic virtues spring, when they live in dense

and squalid masses where social decency is lost, or rather never found—if they would but turn aside from the wide thoroughfares and great houses, and strive to improve the wretched dwellings in by-ways where only Poverty may walk—many low roofs would point more truly to the sky than the loftiest steeple that now rears proudly up from the midst of guilt, and crime, and horrible disease, to mock them by its contrast. In hollow voices from Workhouse, Hospital, and Jail, this truth is preached from day to day, and has been proclaimed for years. It is no light matter—no outcry from the working vulgar—no mere question of the people's health and comforts that may be whistled down on Wednesday nights. In love of home, the love of country has its rise ; and who are the truer patriots or the better in time of need—those who venerate the land, owning its wood, and stream, and earth, and all that they produce ? or those who love their country, boasting not a foot of ground in all its wide domain ?

BUT, before they had reached the corner of the lane, the man came running after them, and, pressing her hand, left something in it—two old, battered, smoke-incrusted penny pieces. Who knows but they shone as brightly in the eyes of angels, as golden gifts that have been chronicled on tombs ?

“**Y**OU were telling me,” she said, “about your gardening. Do you ever plant things here ?”

“In the churchyard ?” returned the sexton. “Not I.”

“I have seen some flowers and little shrubs about,” the child rejoined ; “there are some over there, you see. I thought they were of your rearing, though indeed they grow but poorly.”

“They grow as Heaven wills,” said the old man : “and it kindly ordains that they shall never flourish here.”

“I do not understand you.”

“Why, this it is,” said the sexton. “They mark the graves of those who had very tender, loving friends.”

“I was sure they did!” the child exclaimed. “I am very glad to know they do!”

“Aye,” returned the old man, “but stay. Look at them. See how they hang their heads, and droop, and wither. Do you guess the reason?”

“No,” the child replied.

“Because the memory of those who lie below passes away so soon. At first they tend them, morning, noon, and night; they soon begin to come less frequently; from once a day, to once a week; from once a week to once a month: then, at long and uncertain intervals; then, not at all. Such tokens seldom flourish long. I have known the briefest summer flowers outlive them.”

“I grieve to hear it,” said the child.

“Ah! so say the gentlefolks who come down here to look about them,” returned the old man, shaking his head, “but I say otherwise. ‘It’s a pretty custom you have in this part of the country,’ they say to me sometimes, ‘to plant the graves, but it’s melancholy to see these things all withering or dead.’ I crave their pardon and tell them that, as I take it, ’tis a good sign for the happiness of the living. And so it is. It’s nature.”

“Perhaps the mourners learn to look to the blue sky by day, and to the stars by night, and to think that the dead are there, and not in graves,” said the child in an earnest voice.

“Perhaps so,” replied the old man doubtfully. “It may be.”

“**N**ELL here?” he said cheerfully, as he closed his book. “It does me good to see you in the air and light. I feared you were again in the church, where you so often are.”

“Feared!” replied the child, sitting down beside him. “Is it not a good place?”

“Yes, yes,” said the schoolmaster. “But you must be gay sometimes—nay, don’t shake your head and smile so sadly.”

“Not sadly, if you knew my heart. Do not look at me as if you thought me sorrowful. There is not a happier creature on earth than I am now.”

Full of grateful tenderness, the child took his hand, and folded it between her own. “It’s God’s will!” she said, when they had been silent for some time.

“What?”

“All this,” she rejoined; “all this about us. But which of us is sad now? You see that *I* am smiling.”

“And so am I,” said the schoolmaster; “smiling to think how often we shall laugh in this same place. Were you not talking yonder?”

“Yes,” the child rejoined.

“Of something that has made you sorrowful?”

There was a long pause.

“What was it?” said the schoolmaster, tenderly. “Come. Tell me what it was.”

“I rather grieve—I *do* rather grieve to think,” said the child, bursting into tears, “that those who die about us are so soon forgotten.”

“And do you think,” said the schoolmaster, marking the glance she had thrown around, “that an unvisited grave, a withered tree, a faded flower or two, are tokens of forgetfulness or cold neglect? Do you think there are no deeds, far away from here, in which these dead may be best remembered? Nell, Nell, there may be people busy in the world, at this instant, in whose good actions and good thoughts these very graves—neglected as they look to us—are the chief instruments.”

“Tell me no more,” said the child quickly. “Tell me no more. I feel, I know it. How could *I* be unmindful of it, when I thought of you?”

“There is nothing,” cried her friend, “no, nothing innocent or good, that dies, and is forgotten. Let us hold to that faith, or none. An infant, a prattling child, dying in its cradle, will live again in the better thoughts of those who loved it, and will

play its part, through them, in the redeeming actions of the world, though its body be burnt to ashes or drowned in the deepest sea. There is not an angel added to the Host of Heaven but does its blessed work on earth in those that loved it here. Forgotten ! oh, if the good deeds of human creatures could be traced to their source, how beautiful would even death appear ; for how much charity, mercy, and purified affection would be seen to have their growth in dusty graves !”

“ Yes,” said the child, “ it is the truth : I know it is. Who should feel its force so much as I, in whom your little scholar lives again ! ”

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

THERE are very few moments in a man's existence when he experiences so much ludicrous distress, or meets with so little charitable commiseration, as when he is in pursuit of his own hat. A vast deal of coolness, and a peculiar degree of judgment, are requisite in catching a hat. A man must not be precipitate, or he runs over it ; he must not rush into the opposite extreme, or he loses it altogether. The best way is, to keep gently up with the object of pursuit, to be wary and cautious, to watch your opportunity well, get gradually before it, then make a rapid dive, seize it by the crown, and stick it firmly on your head : smiling pleasantly all the time, as if you thought it as good a joke as anybody else.

NUMEROUS indeed are the hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families, whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide, in the restless struggles of life, are then reunited, and meet once again in that happy state of compan-

ionship and mutual good-will, which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight, and one so incompatible with the cares and sorrows of the world, that the religious belief of the most civilized nations, and the rude traditions of the roughest savages, alike number it among the first joys of a future condition of existence, provided for the blest and happy! How many old recollections, and how many dormant sympathies, does Christmas-time awaken!

We write these words now, many miles distant from the spot at which, year after year, we met on that day, a merry and joyous circle. Many of the hearts that throbbed so gayly then have ceased to beat; many of the looks that shone so brightly then have ceased to glow; the hands we grasped have grown cold; the eyes we sought have hid their lustre in the grave; and yet the old house, the room, the merry voices and smiling faces, the jest, the laugh, the most minute and trivial circumstances connected with those happy meetings, crowd upon our mind at each recurrence of the season, as if the last assemblage had been but yesterday! Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home!

IT is not half as innocent a thing as it looks, that shaking little pieces of carpet—at least, there may be no great harm in the shaking, but the folding is a very insidious process. So long as the shaking lasts, and the two parties are kept the carpet's length apart, it is as innocent an amusement as can well be devised; but when the folding begins, and the distance between them gets gradually lessened from one-half its former length to a quarter, and then to an eighth, and then to a sixteenth, and then to a thirty-second, if the carpet be long enough, it becomes dangerous. We do not know, to a nicety, how many pieces of carpet were folded in this instance, but we can

venture to state that as many pieces as there were, so many times did Sam kiss the pretty housemaid.

WHETHER that species of benevolence which is so very cautious and long-sighted that it is seldom exercised at all, lest its owner should be imposed upon, and so wounded in his self-love, be real charity or a worldly counterfeit, I leave to wiser heads than mine to determine.

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

IT is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would almost seem as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we dearly loved in life. Alas ! how often and how long may those patient angels hover above us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered, and so soon forgotten !

THERE are some men who, living with the one object of enriching themselves, no matter by what means, and being perfectly conscious of the baseness and rascality of the means which they will use every day towards this end, affect nevertheless—even to themselves—a high tone of moral rectitude, and shake their heads and sigh over the depravity of the world. Some of the craftiest scoundrels that ever walked this earth, or rather—for walking implies, at least, an erect position and the bearing of a man—that ever crawled and crept through

life by its dirtiest and narrowest ways, will gravely jot down in diaries the events of every day, and keep a regular debtor and creditor account with Heaven, which shall always show a floating balance in their own favor. Whether this is a gratuitous (the only gratuitous) part of the falsehood and trickery of such men's lives, or whether they really hope to cheat Heaven itself, and lay up treasure in the next world by the same process which has enabled them to lay up treasure in this—not to question how it is, so it is. And, doubtless, such book-keeping (like certain autobiographies which have enlightened the world) cannot fail to prove serviceable, in the one respect of sparing the recording angel some time and labor.

PARENTS who never showed their love, complain of want of natural affection in their children ; children who never showed their duty, complain of want of natural feeling in their parents ; law-makers who find both so miserable that their affections have never had enough of life's sun to develop them, are loud in their moralizings over parents and children too, and cry that the very ties of Nature are disregarded. Natural affections and instincts, my dear sir, are the most beautiful of the Almighty's works, but like other beautiful works of His, they must be reared and fostered, or it is as natural that they should be wholly obscured, and that new feelings should usurp their place, as it is that the sweetest productions of the earth, left untended, should be choked with weeds and briars. I wish we could be brought to consider this, and remembering natural obligations a little more at the right time, talk about them a little less at the wrong one.

THERE is a dread disease which so prepares its victim, as it were, for death ; which so refines it of its grosser aspect, and throws around familiar looks unearthly indications of the coming change ; a dread disease, in which the struggle be-

tween soul and body is so gradual, quiet, and solemn, and the result so sure, that day by day, and grain by grain, the mortal part wastes and withers away, so that the spirit grows light and sanguine with its lightening load, and feeling immortality at hand, deems it but a new term of mortal life ; a disease in which death and life are so strangely blended, that death takes the glow and hue of life, and life the gaunt and grizzly form of death ; a disease which medicine never cured, wealth never warded off, or poverty could boast exemption from ; which sometimes moves in giant strides, and sometimes at a tardy, sluggish pace, but, slow or quick, is ever sure and certain.

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD..

MY father's eyes had closed upon the light of this world six months, when mine opened on it. There is something strange to me, even now, in the reflection that he never saw me ; and something stranger yet in the shadowy remembrance that I have of my first childish associations with his white gravestone in the churchyard, and of the indefinable compassion I used to feel for it lying out alone there in the dark night, when our little parlor was warm and bright with fire and candle, and the doors of our house were—almost cruelly, it seemed to me sometimes—bolted and locked against it.

THERE is nothing half so green that I know anywhere, as the grass of that churchyard ; nothing half so shady as its trees ; nothing half so quiet as its tombstones. The sheep are feeding there, when I kneel up, early in the morning, in my little bed in a closet within my mother's room, to look out at it ; and I see the red light shining on the sun-dial, and

think within myself, "Is the sun-dial glad, I wonder, that it can tell the time again?"

OF course I was in love with little Em'ly. I am sure I loved that baby quite as truly, quite as tenderly, with greater purity and more disinterestedness, than can enter into the best love of a later time of life, high and ennobling as it is. I am sure my fancy raised up something round that blue-eyed mite of a child, which etherealized, and made a very angel of her. If, any sunny forenoon, she had spread a little pair of wings, and flown away before my eyes, I don't think I should have regarded it as much more than I had had reason to expect.

GOD knows how infantine the memory may have been, that was awakened within me by the sound of my mother's voice in the old parlor, when I set foot in the hall. She was singing in a low tone. I think I must have lain in her arms, and heard her singing so to me when I was but a baby. The strain was new to me, and yet it was so old that it filled my heart brimful; like a friend come back from a long absence.

WHEN we had exhausted the subject of the stars, or rather when I had exhausted the mental faculties of Mr. Barkis, little Em'ly and I made a cloak of an old wrapper, and sat under it for the rest of the journey. Ah, how I loved her! What happiness (I thought) if we were married, and were going away anywhere to live among the trees and in the fields, never growing older, never growing wiser, children ever, rambling hand in hand through sunshine and among flowery meadows, laying down our heads on moss at night, in a sweet sleep of purity and peace, and buried by the birds when we

were dead ! Some such picture, with no real world in it, bright with the light of our innocence, and vague as the stars afar off, was in my mind all the way. I am glad to think there were two such guileless hearts at Peggotty's marriage as little Em'ly's and mine. I am glad to think the Loves and Graces took such airy forms in its homely procession.

“**D**EAREST husband !” said Agnes. “Now that I may call you by that name, I have one thing more to tell you.”

“Let me hear it, love.”

“It grows out of the night when Dora died. She sent you for me.”

“She did.”

“She told me that she left me something. Can you think what it was ?”

I believed I could. I drew the wife who had so long loved me, closer to my side.

“She told me that she made a last request to me, and left me a last charge.”

“And it was—”

“That only I would occupy this vacant place.”

And Agnes laid her head upon my breast and wept ; and I wept with her, though we were so happy.

AND now, as I close my task, subduing my desire to linger yet, these faces fade away. But one face, shining on me like a heavenly light by which I see all other objects, is above them and beyond them all. And that remains.

I turn my head, and see it, in its beautiful serenity, beside me. My lamp burns low, and I have written far into the night ; but the dear presence, without which I were nothing, bears me company.

Oh Agnes, oh my soul, so may thy face be by me when I

close my life indeed : so may I, when realities are melting from me like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upwards !

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

ALAS ! are there so few things in the world, about us, most unnatural, and yet most natural in being so ! Hear the magistrate or judge admonish the unnatural outcasts of society ; unnatural in brutal habits, unnatural in want of decency, unnatural in losing and confounding all distinctions between good and evil ; unnatural in ignorance, in vice, in recklessness, in contumacy, in mind, in looks, in everything. But follow the good clergyman, or doctor, who, with his life imperilled at every breath he draws, goes down into their dens, lying within the echoes of our carriage-wheels and daily tread upon the pavement stones. Look round upon the world of odious sights—millions of immortal creatures have no other world on earth—at the lightest mention of which humanity revolts, and dainty delicacy living in the next street, stops her ears, and lisps “ I don’t believe it ! ” Breathe the polluted air, foul with every impurity that is poisonous to health and life ; and have every sense, conferred upon our race for its delight and happiness, offended, sickened, and disgusted, and made a channel by which misery and death alone can enter. Vainly attempt to think of any simple plant, or flower, or wholesome weed, that, set in this foetid bed, could have its natural growth, or put its little leaves off to the sun as God designed it. And then, calling up some ghastly child, with stunted form and wicked face, hold forth on its unnatural sinfulness and lament its being, so early, far away from Heaven—but think a little of its having been conceived, and born and bred, in Hell !

Those who study the physical sciences, and bring them to

bear upon the health of Man, tell us that if the noxious particles that rise from vitiated air were palpable to the sight, we should see them lowering in a dense black cloud above such haunts, and rolling slowly on to corrupt the better portions of a town. But if the moral pestilence that rises with them, and in the eternal laws of outraged Nature, is inseparable from them, could be made discernible too, how terrible the revelation ! Then should we see depravity, impiety, drunkenness, theft, murder, and a long train of nameless sins against the natural affections and repulsions of mankind, overhanging the devoted spots and creeping on, to blight the innocent and spread contagion among the pure. Then should we see how the same poisoned fountains that flow into our hospitals and lazar-houses, inundate the jails, and make the convict-ships swim deep, and roll across the seas, and overrun vast continents with crime. Then should we stand appalled to know, that where we generate disease to strike our children down and entail itself on unborn generations, there also we breed, by the same certain process, infancy that knows no innocence, youth without modesty or shame, maturity that is mature in nothing but in suffering and guilt, blasted old age that is a scandal on the form we bear. Unnatural humanity ! When we shall gather grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles ; when fields of grain shall spring up from the offal in the by-ways of our wicked cities, and roses bloom in the fat churchyards that they cherish ; then we may look for natural humanity and find it growing from such seed.

Oh for a good spirit who would take the house-tops off, with a more potent and benignant hand than the lame demon in the tale, and show a Christian people what dark shapes issue from amidst their homes, to swell the retinue of the Destroying Angel as he moves forth among them ! For only one night's view of the pale phantoms rising from the scenes of our too-long neglect : and from the thick and sullen air where Vice and Fever propagate together, raining the tremendous social retributions which are ever pouring down, and ever coming thicker !

Bright and blest the morning that should rise on such a night : for men, delayed no more by stumbling-blocks of their own making, which are but specks of dust upon the path between them and eternity, would then apply themselves, like creatures of one common origin, owing one duty to the Father of one family, and tending to one common end, to make the world a better place !

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

“**W**HAT does this mean ? Can the false-hearted boy have chosen such a tool as yonder fellow who has just gone out ? Why not ? He has conspired against me, like the rest, and they are but birds of one feather. A new plot ! a new plot ! Oh, self, self, self ! At every turn nothing but self !”

He fell to trifling, as he ceased to speak, with the ashes of the burnt paper in the candlestick. He did so, at first, in pure abstraction, but they presently became the subject of his thoughts.

“Another will made and destroyed,” he said. “Nothing determined on, nothing done, and I might have died to-night ! I plainly see to what foul uses all this money will be put at last,” he cried, almost writhing in the bed ; “after filling me with cares and miseries all my life, it will perpetuate discord and bad passions when I am dead. So it always is. What lawsuits grow out of the graves of rich men every day ; sowing perjury, hatred, and lies among near kindred, where there should be nothing but love ! Heaven help us, we have much to answer for ! Oh, self, self, self ! Every man for himself, and no creature for me !”

Universal self ! Was there nothing of its shadow in these reflections, and in the history of Martin Chuzzlewit, on his own showing ?

“WHY, wot do you mean to say that chit’s been a-doin’ of?” retorted Mrs. Gamp, sharply. “Stuff and nonsense, Mr. Sweedlepipes!”

“He hasn’t been a-doin’ anything!” exclaimed Poor Poll, quite desperate. “What do you catch me up so short for, when you see me put out to that extent that I can hardly speak? He’ll never do anything again. He’s done for. He’s killed. The first time I ever see that boy,” said Poll, “I charged him too much for a red-poll. I asked him three-half-pence for a penny one, because I was afraid he’d beat me down. But he didn’t. And now he’s dead; and if you was to crowd all the steam-engines and electric fluids that ever was into this shop, and set ’em every one to work their hardest, they couldn’t square the account, though it’s only a ha’penny.”

FROM LITTLE DORRIT AND BLEAK HOUSE.

THAT it is at least as difficult to stay a moral infection as a physical one; that such a disease will spread with the malignity and rapidity of the plague; that the contagion, when it has once made head, will spare no pursuit or condition, but will lay hold on people in the soundest health, and become developed in the most unlikely constitutions, is a fact as firmly established by experience as that we human creatures breathe an atmosphere. A blessing beyond appreciation would be conferred upon mankind, if the tainted, in whose weakness or wickedness these virulent disorders are bred, could be instantly seized and placed in close confinement (not to say summarily smothered) before the poison is communicable.

I THINK it must be somewhere written that the virtues of the mothers shall occasionally be visited on the children, as well as the sins of the fathers.

HOWSOEVER bad the devil can be in fustian or smock-frock (and he can be very bad in both), he is a more designing, callous, and intolerable devil when he sticks a pin in his shirt-front, calls himself a gentleman, backs a card or color, plays a game or so of billiards, and knows a little about bills and promissory notes, than in any other form he wears.

CARICATURES.



CHAPTER VI.

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

“**I** HOPE you say your prayers every night,” said another gentleman, in a gruff voice ; “and pray for the people who feed you, and take care of you—like a Christian.”

“Yes, sir,” stammered the boy. The gentleman who spoke last was unconsciously right. It would have been *very* like a Christian, and a marvellously good Christian too, if Oliver had prayed for the people who fed and took care of *him*. But he hadn’t, because nobody had taught him.

“Well ! You have come here to be educated, and taught a useful trade,” said the red-faced gentleman in the high chair.

“So you’ll begin to pick oakum to-morrow morning at six o’clock,” added the surly one in the white waistcoat.

For the combination of both these blessings in the one simple process of picking oakum, Oliver bowed low by the direction of the beadle, and was then hurried away to a large ward, where on a rough, hard bed, he sobbed himself to sleep. What a noble illustration of the tender laws of England ! They let the paupers go to sleep !

OLIVER was denied the benefit of exercise, the pleasure of society, or the advantages of religious consolation. As for exercise, it was nice cold weather, and he was allowed to perform his ablutions every morning under the pump, in a

stone yard, in the presence of Mr. Bumble, who prevented his catching cold, and caused a tingling sensation to pervade his frame, by repeated applications of the cane. As for society, he was carried every other day into the hall, where the boys dined, and there sociably flogged as a public warning and example. And so far from being denied the advantages of religious consolation, he was kicked into the same apartment every evening at prayer-time, and there permitted to listen to, and console his mind with, a general supplication of the boys, containing a special clause, therein inserted by authority of the board, in which they intreated to be made good, virtuous, contented, and obedient, and to be guarded from the sins and vices of Oliver Twist: whom the supplication distinctly set forth to be under the exclusive patronage and protection of the powers of wickedness, and an article direct from the manufactory of the very devil himself.

AS Oliver accompanied his master in most of his adult expeditions, too, in order that he might acquire the equanimity of demeanor and full command of nerve which are so essential to a finished undertaker, he had many opportunities of observing the beautiful resignation and fortitude with which some strong-minded people bear their trials and losses.

For instance: when Sowerberry had an order for the burial of some rich old lady or gentleman, who was surrounded by a great number of nephews and nieces, who had been perfectly inconsolable during the previous illness, and whose grief had been wholly irrepressible even on the most public occasions, they would be as happy among themselves as need be—quite cheerful and contented: conversing together with as much freedom and gayety as if nothing whatever had happened to disturb them. Husbands, too, bore the loss of their wives with the most heroic calmness. Wives, again, put on weeds for their husbands, as if, so far from grieving in the garb of sorrow, they had made up their minds to render it as becoming and

attractive as possible. It was observable, too, that ladies and gentlemen who were in passions of anguish during the ceremony of interment, recovered almost as soon as they reached home, and became quite composed before the tea-drinking was over. All this was very pleasant and improving to see ; and Oliver beheld it with great admiration.

THERE was not so great a necessity for hurrying as Mr. Sowerberry had anticipated, however ; for when they reached the obscure corner of the churchyard in which the nettles grew, and where the parish graves were made, the clergyman had not arrived ; and the clerk, who was sitting by the vestry-room fire, seemed to think it by no means improbable that it might be an hour or so before he came. So they put the bier on the brink of the grave ; and the two mourners waited patiently in the damp clay, with a cold rain drizzling down, while the ragged boys, whom the spectacle had attracted into the churchyard, played a noisy game at hide-and-seek among the tombstones ; or varied their amusements by jumping backward and forward over the coffin. Mr. Sowerberry and Bumble, being personal friends of the clerk, sat by the fire with him, and read the paper.

At length, after a lapse of something more than an hour, Mr. Bumble, and Sowerberry, and the clerk, were seen running toward the grave. Immediately afterwards the clergyman appeared, putting on his surplice as he came along. Mr. Bumble then thrashed a boy or two, to keep up appearances ; and the reverend gentleman, having read as much of the burial-service as could be compressed into four minutes, gave his surplice to the clerk, and walked away again.

“Now, Bill !” said Sowerberry to the grave-digger, “fill up !”

It was no very difficult task ; for the grave was so full, that the uppermost coffin was within a few feet of the surface. The grave-digger shovelled in the earth ; stamped it loosely down

with his feet, shouldered his spade and walked off, followed by the boys, who murmured very loud complaints at the fun being over so soon.

“**S**PEAK to her kindly,” said the young lady to her companion. “Poor creature, she seems to need it.”

“Your haughty religious people would have held their heads up to see me as I am to-night, and preached of flames and vengeance,” cried the girl. “Oh, dear lady, why ar’n’t those who claim to be God’s own folks as gentle and as kind to us poor wretches as you, who, having youth, and beauty, and all that they have lost, might be a little proud instead of so much humbler?”

“Ah!” said the gentleman. “A Turk turns his face, after washing it well, to the East, when he says his prayers; these good people, after giving their faces such a rub against the World as to take the smiles off, turn with no less regularity, to the darkest side of Heaven. Between the Mussulman and the Pharisee, commend me to the first!”

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

TOZER, who was constantly galled and tormented by a starched white cambric neckerchief, which he wore at the express desire of Mrs. Tozer, his parent, who, designing him for the Church, was of opinion that he couldn’t be in that forward state of preparation too soon—Tozer said, indeed, that choosing between two evils, he thought he would rather stay where he was, than go home.

AND now, the mice, who have been busier with the prayer-books than their proper owners, and with the hassocks, more worn by their little teeth than by human knees, hide their

bright eyes in their holes, and gather close together in affright at the resounding clashing of the church-door. For the beadle, that man of power, comes early this morning with the sexton; and Mrs. Miff, the wheezy little pew-opener—a mighty dry old lady, sparsely dressed, with not an inch of fulness anywhere about her—is also here, and has been waiting at the church-gate half an hour, as her place is, for the beadle.

“**V**ERY far. Months upon months over the sea, and far away even then. I have been where convicts go,” she added, looking full upon her entertainer. “I have been one myself.”

“Heaven help you and forgive you!” was the gentle answer.

“Ah! Heaven help me and forgive me!” she returned, nodding her head at the fire. “If man would help some of us a little more, God would forgive us all the sooner perhaps.”

“**T**HERE was a criminal called Alice Marwood—a girl still, but deserted and an outcast. And she was tried, and she was sentenced. And lord, how the gentlemen in the court talked about it! and how grave the judge was on her duty, and on her having perverted the gifts of Nature—as if he didn’t know better than anybody there, that they had been made curses to her!—and how he preached about the strong arm of the Law—so very strong to save her, when she was an innocent and helpless little wretch; and how solemn and religious it all was. I have thought of that, many times since, to be sure!”

She folded her arms tightly on her breast, and laughed in a tone that made the howl of the old woman musical.

“So Alice Marwood was transported, mother,” she pursued, “and was sent to learn her duty, where there was twenty times less duty, and more wickedness, and wrong, and infamy, than here. And Alice Marwood is come back a woman. Such a

woman as she ought to be, after all this. In good time, there will be more solemnity, and more fine talk, and more strong arm, most likely, and there will be an end of her ; but the gentlemen needn't be afraid of being thrown out of work. There's crowds of little wretches, boy and girl, growing up in any of the streets they live in, that'll keep them to it till they've made their fortunes."

THE church Walter had chosen for the purpose, was a mouldy old church in a yard, hemmed in by a labyrinth of back streets and courts, with a little burying-ground round it, and itself buried in a kind of vault, formed by the neighboring houses, and paved with echoing stones. It was a great dim, shabby pile, with high old oaken pews, among which about a score of people lost themselves every Sunday ; while the clergyman's voice drowsily resounded through the emptiness, and the organ rumbled and rolled as if the church had got the colic, for want of a congregation to keep the wind and damp out. But so far was this city church from languishing for the company of other churches, that spires were clustered round it, as the masts of shipping cluster on the river. It would have been hard to count them from its steeple-top, they were so many. In almost every yard and blind-place near, there was a church. The confusion of bells when Susan and Mr. Toots betook themselves towards it on the Sunday morning, was deafening. There were twenty churches close together, clamoring for people to come in.

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

NOW, to be sure, Mrs. Varden thought, here is a perfect character. Here is a meek, righteous, thoroughgoing Christian, who, having mastered all these qualities, so difficult

of attainment ; who, having dropped a pinch of salt on the tails of all the cardinal virtues, and caught them every one, makes light of their possession, and pants for more morality. For the good woman never doubted (as many good men and women never do), that this slighting kind of profession, this setting so little store by great matters, this seeming to say "I am not proud, I am what you hear, but I consider myself no better than other people ; let us change the subject, pray"—were perfectly genuine and true. He so contrived it, and said it in that way that it appeared to have been forced from him, and its effect was marvellous.

Aware of the impression he had made—few men were quicker than he at such discoveries—Mr. Chester followed up the blow, by propounding certain virtuous maxims, somewhat vague and general in their nature, doubtless, and occasionally partaking of the character of truisms, worn a little out at elbow, but delivered in so charming a voice, and with such uncommon serenity and peace of mind, that they answered as well as the best. Nor is this to be wondered at ; for as hollow vessels produce a far more musical sound in falling than those which are substantial, so it will oftentimes be found that sentiments which have nothing in them make the loudest ringing in the world, and are the most relished.

THE thoughts of worldly men are forever regulated by a moral law of gravitation, which, like the physical one, holds them down to earth. The bright glory of day, and the silent wonders of a starlit night, appeal to their minds in vain. There are no signs in the sun, or in the moon, or in the stars, for their reading. They are like some wise men, who, learning to know each planet by its Latin name, have quite forgotten such small heavenly constellations as Charity, Forbearance, Universal Love, and Mercy, although they shine by night and day so brightly that the blind may see them ; and who, looking upward at the spangled sky, see nothing there but the reflection of their own great wisdom and book-learning.

It is curious to imagine these people of the world, busy in thought, turning their eyes toward the countless spheres that shine above us, and making them reflect the only images their minds contain. The man who lives but in the breath of princes has nothing in his sight but stars for courtiers' breasts. The envious man beholds his neighbors' honors even in the sky ; to the money-hoarder, and the mass of worldly folk, the whole great universe above glitters with sterling coin, fresh from the mint, stamped with the sovereign's head, coming always between them and heaven, turn where they may. So do the shadows of our own desires stand between us and our better angels, and thus their brightness is eclipsed.

“**H**E an't blown away, I suppose,” said Parkes. “It’s enough to carry a man of his figure off his legs, and easy, too. Do you hear it? It blows great guns, indeed. There’ll be many a crash in the Forest to-night, I reckon, and many a broken branch upon the ground to-morrow.”

“It won’t break anything in the Maypole, I take it, sir,” returned old John. “Let it try. I give it leave—what’s that?”

“The wind,” cried Parkes. “It’s howling like a Christian, and has been all night long.”

“**S**O ends, my lord,” said Gashford, filling his glass with great complacency, “the blessed work of a most blessed day.”

“And of a blessed yesterday,” said his lordship, raising his head.

“Ah !”—and here the secretary clasped his hands—“a blessed yesterday indeed ! The Protestants of Suffolk are godly men and true. Though others of our countrymen have lost their way in darkness, even as we, my lord, did lose our road to-night, theirs is the light and glory.”

“Did I move them, Gashford ?” said Lord George.

“Move them, my lord! Move them! They cried to be led on against the Papists, they vowed a dreadful vengeance on their heads, they roared like men possessed—”

“But not by devils,” said his lord.

“By devils! my lord! By angels.”

“Yes—oh surely—by angels, no doubt,” said Lord George, thrusting his hands into his pockets, taking them out again to bite his nails, and looking uncomfortably at the fire. “Of course by angels—eh Gashford?”

“You do not doubt it, my lord,” said the secretary.

“No—no,” returned his lord. “No. Why should I? I suppose it would be decidedly irreligious to doubt it—wouldn’t it, Gashford? Though there certainly were,” he added, without waiting for an answer, “some plaguy ill-looking characters among them.”

“**B**ETWEEN Bloody Marys, and blue cockades, and glorious Queen Besses, and no Poperys, and Protestant associations, and making of speeches,” pursued John Grueby, looking, as usual, a long way off, and taking no notice of this hint, “my lord’s half off his head. When we go out o’ doors, such a set of ragamuffins comes a-shouting after us ‘Gordon forever!’ that I’m ashamed of myself and don’t know where to look. When we’re indoors, they come a-roaring and screaming about the house like so many devils; and my lord instead of ordering them to be drove away, goes out into the balcony and demeans himself by making speeches to ’em, and calls ’em ‘Men of England,’ and ‘Fellow-countrymen,’ as if he was fond of ’em and thanked ’em for coming. I can’t make it out, but they’re all mixed up somehow or another with that unfort’nate Bloody Mary, and call her name out till they’re hoarse. They’re all Protestants, too—every man and boy among ’em: and Protestants is very fond of spoons I find, and silver-plate in general, whenever area-gates is left open accidentally. I wish that was the worst of it, and that no more harm might be to

come ; but if you don't stop these ugly customers in time, Mr. Gashford (and I know you ; you're the man that blows the fire), you'll find 'em grow a little bit too strong for you. One of these evenings, when the weather gets warmer and Protestants are thirsty, they'll be pulling London down,—and I never heerd that Bloody Mary went as far as *that*."

"**P**ARLIAMENT says this here—says Parliament 'If any man, woman, or child does anything which goes again a certain number of our acts'—how many hanging laws may there be at this present time, Muster Gashford? Fifty?"

"I don't exactly know how many," replied Gashford, leaning back in his chair and yawning ; "a great number, though."

"Well ; say fifty. Parliament says 'If any man, woman, or child does anything again any one of them fifty acts, that man, woman, or child shall be worked off by Dennis.' George the Third steps in when they number very strong at the end of a session, and says 'These are too many for Dennis. I'll have half for *myself* and Dennis shall have half for *himself* ;' and sometimes he throws me in one over that I don't expect, as he did three years ago, when I got Mary Jones, a young woman of nineteen who come up to Tyburn with a infant at her breast, and was worked off for taking a piece of cloth off the counter of a shop in Ludgate Hill, and putting it down again when the shopman see her ; and who had never done any harm before, and only tried to do that, in consequence of her husband having been pressed three weeks previous, and she being left to beg, with two young children—as was proved upon the trial. Ha, ha !—Well ! That being the law and the practice of England, is the glory of England, an't it, Muster Gashford ?"

"Certainly," said the secretary.

"And in times to come," pursued the hangman, "if our grandsons should think of their grandfathers' times, and find these things altered, they'll say 'Those were days indeed, and

we've been going down hill ever since.'—Won't they, Muster Gashford?"

“**H**AVE I no feeling for you, because I am blind? No, I have not. Why do you expect me, being in darkness, to be better than men who have their sight—why should you? Is the hand of Heaven more manifest in my having no eyes, than in your having two? It's the cant of you folks to be horrified if a blind man robs, or lies, or steals; oh yes, it's far worse in him, who can barely live on the few half-pence that are thrown to him in streets, than in you, who can see, and work, and are not dependent on the mercies of the world. A curse on you! You who have five senses may be wicked at your pleasure; we who have four, and want the most important, are to live and be moral on our affliction. The true charity and justice of rich to poor, all the world over!”

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

THE gloomy taint that was in the Murdstone blood, darkened the Murdstone religion, which was austere and wrathful. I have thought, since, that its assuming that character was a necessary consequence of Mr. Murdstone's firmness, which wouldn't allow him to let anybody off from the utmost weight of the severest penalties he could find any excuse for. Be this as it may, I well remember the tremendous visages with which we used to go to church, and the changed air of the place. Again the dreaded Sunday comes round, and I file into the old pew first, like a guarded captive brought to a condemned service. Again, Miss Murdstone, in a black velvet gown, that looks as if it had been made out of a pall, follows close upon me; then my mother; then her husband. There

is no Peggotty now, as in the old time. Again, I listen to Miss Murdstone mumbling the responses, and emphasizing all the dread words with a cruel relish. Again, I see her dark eyes roll round the church when she says "miserable sinners," as if she were calling all the congregation names. Again, I catch rare glimpses of my mother, moving her lips timidly between the two, with one of them muttering at each ear like low thunder. Again, I wonder with a sudden fear whether it is likely that our good old clergyman can be wrong, and Mr. and Miss Murdstone right, and that all the angels in heaven can be destroying angels. Again, if I move a finger or relax a muscle of my face, Miss Murdstone pokes me with her prayer-book, and makes my side ache.

AS to any recreation with other children of my age, I had very little of that ; for the gloomy theology of the Murdstones made all children out to be a swarm of little vipers (though there *was* a child once set in the midst of the disciples), and held that they contaminated one another.

AS I did not care, however, to get to Highgate before one or two o'clock in the day, and as we had another little excommunication case in court that morning, which was called The Office of the Judge promoted by Tipkins against Bullock for his soul's correction, I passed an hour or two in attendance on it with Mr. Spenlow very agreeably. It arose out of a scuffle between two churchwardens, one of whom was alleged to have pushed the other against a pump ; the handle of which pump projecting into a school-house, which school-house was under a gable of the church-roof, made the push an ecclesiastical offence. It was an amusing case ; and sent me up to Highgate, on the box of the stage-coach, thinking about the Commons, and what Mr. Spenlow had said about touching the Commons and bringing down the country.

“**D**OES he gloomily profess to be (I am ashamed to use the word in such association) religious still?” I inquired.

“You anticipate, sir,” said Mr. Chillip, his eyelids getting quite red with the unwonted stimulus in which he was indulging, “one of Mrs. Chillip’s most impressive remarks. Mrs. Chillip,” he proceeded, in the calmest and slowest manner, “quite electrified me, by pointing out that Mr. Murdstone sets up an image of himself, and calls it the Divine Nature. You might have knocked me down on the flat of my back, sir, with the feather of a pen, I assure you, when Mrs. Chillip said so. The ladies are great observers, sir?”

“Intuitively,” said I, to his extreme delight.

“I am very happy to receive such support in my opinion, sir,” he rejoined. “It is not often that I venture to give a non-medical opinion, I assure you. Mr. Murdstone delivers public addresses sometimes, and it is said,—in short, sir, it is said by Mrs. Chillip—that the darker tyrant he has lately been, the more ferocious is his doctrine.”

“I believe Mrs. Chillip to be perfectly right,” said I.

“Mrs. Chillip does go so far as to say,” pursued the meekest of little men, much encouraged, “that what such people miscall their religion, is a vent for their bad-humors and arrogance. And do you know I must say, sir,” he continued, mildly laying his head on one side, “that I *don’t* find authority for Mr. and Miss Murdstone in the New Testament?”

“I have never found it either!” said I.

“In the meantime, sir,” said Mr. Chillip, “they are much disliked; and as they are very free in consigning everybody who dislikes them to perdition, we really have a good deal of perdition going on in our neighborhood! However, as Mrs. Chillip says, sir, they undergo a continual punishment; for they are turned inward, to feed upon their own hearts, and their own hearts are very bad feeding.”

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

“**H**OW’S mother-in-law, this mornin’?”

“Queer, Sammy, queer,” replied the elder Mr. Weller, with impressive gravity. “She’s been gettin’ rayther in the Methodistical order lately, Sammy; and she is uncommon pious, to be sure. She’s too good a creetur for me, Sammy. I feel I don’t deserve her.”

“Ah,” said Mr. Samuel, “that’s wery self-denyin’ o’ you.”

“Wery,” replied his parent, with a sigh. “She’s got hold o’ some invention for grown-up people being born again, Sammy; the new birth, I think they calls it. I should wery much like to see that system in haction, Sammy. I should wery much like to see your mother-in-law born again. Wouldn’t I put her out to nurse!”

“What do you think them women does t’other day,” continued Mr. Weller after a short pause, during which he had significantly struck the side of his nose with his forefinger some half dozen times. “What do you think they does, t’other day, Sammy?”

“Don’t know,” replied Sam, “what?”

“Goes and gets up a grand tea-drinkin’ for a feller they calls their shepherd,” said Mr. Weller. “I was a-standing starin’ in at the pictur shop down at our place, when I sees a little bill about it; ‘tickets half-a-crown. All applications to be made to the committee. Secretary, Mrs. Weller;’ and when I got home there was the committee a-sittin’ in our back parlor. Fourteen women; I wish you could ha’ heard ’em, Sammy. There they was, a passin’ resolutions, and wotin supplies, and all sort o’ games. Well, what with your mother-in-law a-worrying me to go, and what with my looking for’ard to seein’ some queer starts if I did, I put my name down for a ticket; at six o’clock on the Friday evenin’ I dresses myself out very smart, and off I goes with the old ’ooman, and up we walks into a fust floor where there was tea-things for thirty,

and a whole lot o' women, as begins whisperin' to one another, and lookin' at me, as if they'd never seen a rayther stout gem'lm'n of eight-and-fifty afore. By and by there comes a great bustle downstairs, and a lanky chap with a red nose and a white neckcloth rushes up, and sings out, 'Here's the shepherd a-coming to wisit his faithful flock;' and in comes a fat chap in black, with a great white face, a-smilin' away like clockwork. Such goin's on, Sammy! 'The kiss of peace,' says the shepherd; and then he kissed the women all round, and ven. he'd done the man with the red nose began. I was just a-thinkin' whether I hadn't better begin too—'specially as there was a werry nice lady a-sittin' next me—ven in comes the tea, and your mother-in-law, as had been makin' the kettle bile downstairs. At it they went, tooth and nail. Such a precious loud hymn, Sammy, while the tea was a-brewing; such a grace, such eatin' and drinkin'! I wish you could ha' seen the shepherd walkin' into the ham and muffins. I never see such a chap to eat and drink; never. The red-nosed man warn't by no means the sort of person you'd like to grub by contract, but he was nothin' to the shepherd. Well; arter the tea was over, they sang another hymn, and then the shepherd began to preach; and wery well he did it, considerin' how heavy them muffins must have lied on his chest. Presently he pulls up, all of a sudden, and hollers out 'Where is the sinner; where is the mis'erable sinner?' Upon which, all the women looked at me, and began to groan as if they was a-dying. I thought it was rather sing'lar, but hows'ever, I says nothing. Presently he pulls up again, and lookin' wery hard at me, says, 'Where is the sinner; where is the mis'erable sinner?' and all the women groans again, ten times louder than afore. I got rather wild at this, so I takes a step or two for'ard and says, 'My friend,' says I, 'did you apply that 'ere obseruation to me?' 'Stead of begging my pardon as any gen'l'm'n would ha' done, he got more abusive than ever; called me a wessel, Sammy—a wessel of wrath—and all sorts o' names. So my blood being reg'larly up, I first give him two or three for him-

self, and then two or three more to hand over to the man with the red nose, and walked off. I wish you could ha' heard how the women screamed, Sammy, ven they picked up the shepherd from under the table.

“**T**HE worst o' these here shepherds is, my boy, that they reg'larly turns the heads of all the young ladies about here. Lord bless their little hearts, they thinks it's all right, and don't know no better ; but they're the wictims o' gammon, Samivel ; they're the wictims o' gammon.”

“I s'pose they are,” said Sam.

“Nothin' else,” said Mr. Weller, shaking his head gravely ; “and wot aggrawates me, Samivel, is to see 'em a-wastin' all their time and labor in making clothes for copper-colored people as don't want 'em, and taking nò notice of flesh-colored Christians as do. If I'd my vay, Samivel, I'd just stick some o' these here lazy shepherds behind a heavy wheelbarrow, and run 'em up and down a fourteen-inch-wide plank all day. That 'ud shake the nonsense out of 'em, if anythin' would.”

HE furthermore conjured him to avoid, above all things, the vice of intoxication, which he likened unto the filthy habits of swine, and to those poisonous and baleful drugs which, being chewed in the mouth, are said to filch away the memory. At this point of his discourse, the reverend and red-nosed gentleman became singularly incoherent, and staggering to and fro, in the excitement of his eloquence, was fain to catch at the back of a chair to preserve his perpendicular.

Mr. Stiggins did not desire his hearers to be upon their guard against those false prophets and wretched mockers of religion, who, without sense to expound its first doctrines, or hearts to feel its first principles, are more dangerous members of society

than the common criminal; imposing, as they necessarily do, upon the weakest and worst-informed, casting scorn and contempt on what should be held most sacred, and bringing into partial disrepute large bodies of virtuous and well-conducted persons of many excellent sects and persuasions. But as he leant over the back of the chair for a considerable time, and closing one eye, winked a good deal with the other, it is presumed that he thought all this, but kept it to himself.

“**I** WOS a-thinkin’, Sammy,” said Mr. Weller, eying his son with great earnestness over his pipe, as if to assure him that, however extraordinary and incredible the declaration might appear, it was nevertheless calmly and deliberately uttered. “I wos a-thinkin’, Sammy, that upon the whole I wos werry sorry she wos gone.”

“Vell, and so you ought to be,” replied Sam.

Mr. Weller nodded his acquiescence in the sentiment, and again fastening his eyes on the fire, shrouded himself in a cloud, and mused deeply.

“Those wos wery sensible observations as she made, Sammy,” said Mr. Weller driving the smoke away with his hand, after a long silence.

“Wot observations?” inquired Sam.

“Them as she made arter she was took ill,” replied the old gentleman.

“Wot wos they?”

“Somethin’ to this here effect. ‘Veller,’ she says, ‘I’m afeard I’ve not done by you quite wot I ought to have done; you’re a wery kind-hearted man, and I might ha’ made your home more comfortabler. I begin to see now,’ she says, ‘ven it’s too late, that if a married ’ooman vishes to be religious, she should begin vith dischargin’ her dooties at home, and makin’ them as is about her cheerful and happy, and that vile she goes to church, or chapel, or wot not, at all proper times, she should be wery careful not to con-wert this sort o’ thing into a

excuse for idleness or self-indulgence. I *have* done this,' she says, 'and I've vasted time and substance on them as has done it more than me; but I hope ven I'm gone, Veller, that you'll think on me as I wos afore I know'd them people, and as I raly wos by natur'.' 'Susan,' says I—I was took up wery short by this, Samivel; I won't deny it, my boy—'Susan,' I says, 'you've been a wery good vife to me, altogether; don't say nothin' at all about it; keep a good heart, my dear; and you'll live to see me punch that 'ere Stiggins's head yet.' She smiled at this, Samivel," said the old gentleman, stifling a sigh with his pipe, "but she died arter all!"

"Vell," said Sam, venturing to offer a little homely consolation, after the lapse of three or four minutes, consumed by the old gentleman in slowly shaking his head from side to side, and solemnly smoking; "vell, gov'ner, ve must all come to it, one day or another."

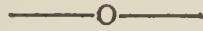
"So we must, Sammy," said Mr. Weller the elder.

"There's a Providence in it all," said Sam.

"O' course there is," replied his father, with a nod of grave approval. "Wot 'ud become of the undertakers vithout it, Sammy?"

Lost in the immense field of conjecture opened by this reflection, the elder Mr. Weller laid his pipe on the table, and stirred the fire with a meditative visage.

LIFE'S SHADOWS.



CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

“**I**F he deserts me, Nell, at this moment—if he deserts me now, when I should, with his assistance, be recompensed for all the time and money I have lost, and all the agony of mind I have undergone, which makes me what you see, I am ruined, and—worse, far worse than that—have ruined thee, for whom I ventured all. If we are beggars—”

“What if we are?” said the child boldly. “Let us be beggars, and be happy.”

“Beggars—and happy!” said the old man. “Poor child!”

“Dear grandfather!” cried the girl, with an energy which shone in her flushed face, trembling voice, and impassioned gesture, “I am not a child in that I think, but even if I am, oh, hear me pray that we may beg, or work in open roads or fields, to earn a scanty living, rather than live as we do now.”

“Nelly,” said the old man.

“Yes, yes, rather than live as we do now,” the child repeated, more earnestly than before. “If you are sorrowful, let me know why, and be sorrowful too; if you waste away and are paler and weaker every day, let me be your nurse and try to comfort you. If you are poor, let us be poor together; but let me be with you, do let me be with you; do not let me see such change, and not know why, or I shall break my heart and die. Dear grandfather, let us leave this sad place to-morrow, and beg our way from door to door.”

The old man covered his face with his hands, and hid it in the pillow of the couch on which he lay.

“Let us be beggars,” said the child, passing an arm round his neck. “I have no fear but we shall have enough; I am sure we shall. Let us walk through country places, and sleep in fields and under trees, and never think of money again, or anything that can make you sad; but rest at nights, and have the sun and wind upon our faces in the day, and thank God together! Let us never set foot in dark rooms or melancholy houses any more, but wander up and down wherever we like to go; and when you are tired, you shall stop to rest in the pleasantest place that we can find, and I will go and beg for both.”

The child’s voice was lost in sobs as she dropped upon the old man’s neck; nor did she weep alone.

IN one so young, and so unused to the scenes in which she had lately moved, this sinking of the spirit was not surprising. But Nature often enshrines gallant and noble hearts in weak bosoms—oftenest, God bless her, in female breasts—and when the child, casting her tearful eyes upon the old man, remembered how weak he was, and how destitute and helpless he would be if she failed him, her heart swelled within her, and animated her with new strength and fortitude.

HE was a very young boy; quite a little child. His hair still hung in curls about his face, and his eyes were very bright; but their light was of heaven, not earth. The schoolmaster took a seat beside him, and stooping over the pillow, whispered his name. The boy sprung up, stroked his face with his hand, and threw his wasted arms round his neck, crying out that he was his dear, kind friend.

“I hope I always was. I meant to be, God knows,” said the poor schoolmaster.

“Who is that?” said the boy, seeing Nell. “I am afraid to kiss her, lest I should make her ill. Ask her to shake hands with me.”

The sobbing child came closer up, and took the little, languid hand in hers. Releasing his again after a time, the sick boy laid him gently down.

“You remember the garden, Harry,” whispered the schoolmaster, anxious to rouse him, for a dulness seemed gathering upon the child, “and how pleasant it used to be in the evening time? You must make haste to visit it again, for I think the very flowers have missed you, and are less gay than they used to be. You will come soon, my dear, very soon now—won’t you?”

The boy smiled faintly—so very, very faintly—and put his hand upon his friend’s gray head. He moved his lips too, but no voice came from them; no, not a sound.

In the silence that ensued, the hum of distant voices borne upon the evening air came floating through the open window. “What’s that?” said the sick child, opening his eyes.

“The boys at play upon the green.”

He took a handkerchief from his pillow, and tried to wave it above his head. But the feeble arm dropped powerless down.

“Shall I do it?” said the schoolmaster.

“Please wave it at the window,” was the faint reply. “Tie it to the lattice. Some of them may see it there. Perhaps they’ll think of me, and look this way.”

He raised his head, and glanced from the fluttering signal to his idle bat that lay with slate and book and other boyish property upon a table in the room. And then he laid him softly down once more, and asked if the little girl were there, for he could not see her.

She stepped forward, and pressed the passive hand that lay upon the coverlet. The two old friends and companions—for such they were, though they were man and child—held each other in a long embrace, and then the little scholar turned his face towards the wall, and fell asleep.

The poor schoolmaster sat in the same place, holding the small cold hand in his, and chafing it. It was but the hand of a dead child. He felt that; and yet he chafed it still, and could not lay it down.

THE plain, frank kindness of the honest schoolmaster, the affectionate earnestness of his speech and manner, the truth which was stamped upon his every word and look, gave the child a confidence in him, which the utmost arts of treachery and dissimulation could never have awakened in her breast. She told him all—that they had no friend or relative—that she had fled with the old man, to save him from a mad-house, and all the miseries he dreaded—that she was flying now, to save him from himself—and that she sought an asylum in some remote and primitive place, where the temptation before which he fell would never enter, and her late sorrows and distresses could have no place.

The schoolmaster heard her with astonishment. “This child!”—he thought—“has this child heroically persevered under all doubts and dangers, struggled with poverty and suffering, upheld and sustained by strong affection and the consciousness of rectitude alone! And yet the world is full of such heroism. Have I yet to learn that the hardest and best-borne trials are those which are never chronicled in any earthly record, and are suffered every day! And should I be surprised to hear the story of this child!”

SHE had sought out the young children whom she first saw playing in the churchyard. One of these—he who had spoken of his brother—was her little favorite and friend, and often sat by her side in the church, or climbed with her to the tower-top. It was his delight to help her, or to fancy that he did so, and they soon became close companions.

It happened that, as she was reading in the old spot by her-

self one day, this child came running in with his eyes full of tears, and after holding her from him, and looking at her eagerly for a moment, clasped his little arms passionately about her neck.

"What now?" said Nell, soothing him. "What is the matter?"

"She is not one yet!" cried the boy, embracing her still more closely. "No, no; not yet."

She looked at him wonderingly, and putting his hair back from his face, and kissing him, asked what he meant.

"You must not be one, dear Nell," cried the boy. "We can't see them. They never come to play with us, or talk to us. Be what you are. You are better so."

"I do not understand you," said the child. "Tell me what you mean."

"Why, they say," replied the boy, looking up into her face, "that you will be an angel before the birds sing again. But you won't be, will you? Don't leave us, Nell, though the sky is bright. Do not leave us!"

The child dropped her head, and put her hands before her face.

"She cannot bear the thought!" cried the boy, exulting through his tears. "You will not go. You know how sorry we should be. Dear Nell, tell me that you'll stay among us. Oh! Pray, pray, tell me that you will."

The little creature folded his hands, and knelt down at her feet.

"Only look at me, Nell," said the boy, "and tell me that you'll stop, and then I shall know that they are wrong, and will cry no more. Won't you say yes, Nell?"

Still the drooping head and hidden face, and the child quite silent—save for her sobs.

"After a time," pursued the boy, trying to draw away her hand, "the kind angels will be glad to think that you are not among them, and that you stayed here to be with us. Willy went away to join them; but if he had known how I should

miss him in our little bed at night, he never would have left me, I am sure."

Yet the child could make him no answer, and sobbed as though her heart were bursting.

"Why would you go, dear Nell? I know you would not be happy when you heard that we were crying for your loss. They say that Willy is in Heaven now, and that it's always summer there, and yet I'm sure he grieves when I lie down upon his garden bed, and he cannot turn to kiss me. But if you do go, Nell," said the boy, caressing her, and pressing his face to hers, "be fond of him, for my sake. Tell him how I love him still, and how much I loved you; and when I think that you two are together, and are happy, I'll try to bear it, and never give you pain by doing wrong—indeed, I never will!"

The child suffered him to move her hands, and put them round his neck. There was a tearful silence, but it was not long before she looked upon him with a smile, and promised him in a very gentle, quiet voice, that she would stay, and be his friend, as long as Heaven would let her. He clapped his hands for joy, and thanked her many times; and being charged to tell no person what had passed between them, gave her an earnest promise that he never would.

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

"**J**OE WILLET, or his ghost?" said Varden, rising from the desk at which he was busy at his books, and looking at him under his spectacles. "Which is it? Joe in the flesh, eh? That's hearty. And how are all the Chigwell company, Joe?"

"Much as usual, sir—they and I agree as well as ever."

"Well, well!" said the locksmith. "We must be patient, Joe, and bear with old folks' foibles. How's the mare, Joe?"

Does she do the four miles an hour as easily as ever? Ha, ha, ha! Does she, Joe? Eh!—What have we there, Joe—a nosegay?”

“A very poor one, sir—I thought Miss Dolly—”

“No, no,” said Gabriel, dropping his voice, and shaking his head, “not Dolly. Give ’em to her mother, Joe. A great deal better give ’em to her mother. Would you mind giving ’em to Mrs. Varden, Joe?”

“Oh no, sir,” Joe replied, and endeavoring, but not with the greatest possible success, to hide his disappointment. “I shall be very glad, I’m sure.”

“That’s right,” said the locksmith, patting him on the back. “It don’t matter who has ’em, Joe?”

“Not a bit, sir.”—Dear heart, how the words stuck in his throat!

“Come in,” said Gabriel. “I have just been called to tea. She’s in the parlor.”

“She,” thought Joe. “Which of ’em, I wonder—Mrs. or Miss?” The locksmith settled the doubt as neatly as if it had been expressed aloud, by leading him to the door, and saying, “Martha, my dear, here’s young Mr. Willet.”

Now, Mrs. Varden, regarding the Maypole as a sort of human man-trap, or decoy for husbands; viewing its proprietor, and all who aided and abetted him, in the light of so many poachers among Christian men; and believing, moreover, that the publicans coupled with sinners in Holy Writ were veritable licensed victuallers—was far from being favorably disposed towards her visitor. Wherefore she was taken faint directly; and being duly presented with the crocuses and snowdrops, divined on further consideration that they were the occasion of the languor which had seized upon her spirits. “I’m afraid I couldn’t bear the room another minute,” said the good lady, “if they remained here. *Would* you excuse my putting them out the window?”

Joe begged she wouldn’t mention it on any account, and smiled feebly as he saw them deposited on the sill outside. If

anybody could have known the pains he had taken to make up that despised and misused bunch of flowers !

“ I feel it quite a relief to get rid of them, I assure you,” said Mrs. Varden. “ I’m better already.” And indeed she did appear to have plucked up her spirits.

Joe expressed his gratitude to Providence for this favorable dispensation, and tried to look as if he didn’t wonder where Dolly was.

AND it was for this Joe had looked forward to the twenty-fifth of March for weeks and weeks, and had gathered the flowers with so much care, and had cocked his hat, and made himself so smart ! This was the end of all his bold determination, resolved upon for the hundredth time, to speak out to Dolly and tell her how he loved her ! To see her for a minute—for but a minute—to find her going out to a party and glad to go ; to be looked upon as a common pipe-smoker, beer-bibber, spirit-guzzler and tosspot ! He bade farewell to his friend the locksmith, and hastened to take horse at the Black Lion, thinking as he turned towards home, as many another Joe has thought before and since, that here was an end to all his hopes—that the thing was impossible and never could be—that she didn’t care for him—that he was wretched for life—and that the only congenial prospect left him, was to go for a soldier or a sailor, and get some obliging enemy to knock his brains out as soon as possible.

TO be shelterless and alone in the open country, hearing the wind moan, and watching for day through the whole long, weary night ; to listen to the falling rain, and crouch for warmth beneath the lee of some old barn or rick, or in the hollow of a tree—are dismal things, but not so dismal as the wandering up and down where shelter is, and beds and sleepers are by thousands ; a houseless, rejected creature. To pace the

echoing stones from hour to hour, counting the dull chimes of the clocks ; to watch the lights twinkling in chamber-windows ; to think what happy forgetfulness each house shuts in ; that here are children coiled together in their beds, here youth, here age, here poverty, here wealth, all equal in their sleep, and all at rest ; to have nothing in common with the slumbering world around, not even sleep, Heaven's gift to all its creatures, and be akin to nothing but despair ; to feel, by the wretched contrast with everything on every hand, more utterly alone and cast away than in a trackless desert—this is a kind of suffering, on which the rivers of great cities close full many a time, and which the solitude in crowds alone awakens.

“**T**HE curse may pass your lips,” said Edward, “but it will be but empty breath. I do not believe that any man on earth has greater power to call one down upon his fellow—least of all upon his own child—than he has to make one drop of rain or flake of snow fall from the clouds above us at his impious bidding. Beware, sir, what you do.”

“You are so very irreligious, so exceedingly undutiful, so horribly profane,” rejoined his father, turning his face lazily towards him, and cracking another nut, “that I positively must interrupt you here. It is quite impossible we can continue to go on, upon such terms as these. If you will do me the favor to ring the bell, the servant will show you to the door. Return to this roof no more, I beg you. Go, sir, since you have no moral sense remaining : and go to the Devil, at my express desire. Good-day.”

Edward left the room, without another word or look, and turned his back upon the house forever.

THIS was a man with dusty feet and garments, who stood bareheaded, behind the hedge that divided their patch of garden from the pathway, and leaned meekly forward as if he sought to mingle with their conversation, and waited for his

time to speak. His face was turned towards the brightness, too, but the light that fell upon it showed that he was blind, and saw it not.

"A blessing on those voices!" said the wayfarer. "I feel the beauty of the night more keenly, when I hear them. They are like eyes to me. Will they speak again, and cheer the heart of a poor traveller?"

"Have you no guide?" asked the widow, after a moment's pause.

"None but that," he answered, pointing with his staff towards the sun; "and sometimes a milder one at night, but she is idle now."

"Have you travelled far?"

"A weary way and long," rejoined the traveller, as he shook his head. "A weary, weary way. I struck my stick just now upon the bucket of your well—be pleased to let me have a draught of water, lady."

"Why do you call me lady?" she returned. "I am as poor as you."

"Your speech is soft and gentle, and I judge by that," replied the man. "The coarsest stuffs and finest silks are—apart from the sense of touch—alike to me. I cannot judge you by your dress."

"Come round this way," said Barnaby, who had passed out at the garden gate, and now stood close beside him. "Put your hand in mine. You're blind, and always in the dark, eh? Are you frightened in the dark? Do you see great crowds of faces, now? Do they grin and chatter?"

"Alas!" returned the other, "I see nothing. Waking or sleeping, nothing."

Barnaby looked curiously at his eyes, and touching them with his fingers, as an inquisitive child might, led him towards the house.

"You have come a long distance," said the widow, meeting him at the door. "How have you found your way so far?"

"Use and necessity are good teachers, as I have heard—the

best of any," said the blind man, sitting down upon the chair to which Barnaby had led him, and putting his hat and stick upon the red-tiled floor. "May neither you nor your son ever learn under them. They are rough masters."

"You have wandered from the road, too," said the widow, in a tone of pity.

"Maybe, maybe," returned the blind man with a sigh, and yet with something of a smile upon his face, "that's likely. Handposts and milestones are dumb, indeed, to me. Thank you the more for this rest, and this refreshing drink!"

"**D**ID I go home when I had done? And oh, my God! how long it took to do! Did I stand before my wife, and tell her? Did I see her fall upon the ground; and, when I stooped to raise her, did she thrust me back with a force that cast me off as if I had been a child, staining the hand with which she clasped my wrist. Is *that* fancy?"

"Did she go down upon her knees, and call on Heaven to witness that she and her unborn child renounced me from that hour; and did she, in words so solemn that they turned me cold—me, fresh from the horrors my own hands had made—warn me to fly while there was time; for though she would be silent, being my wretched wife, she would not shelter me? Did I go forth that night, abjured of God and man, and anchored deep in hell, to wander at my cable's length about the earth, and surely to be drawn down at last?"

"Why did you return?" said the blind man.

"Why is blood red? I could no more help it, than I could live without breath. I struggled against the impulse, but I was drawn back, through every difficult and adverse circumstance, as by a mighty engine. Nothing could stop me. The day and hour were none of my choice. Sleeping and waking, I had been among the old haunts for years—had visited my own grave. Why did I come back? Because this jail was gaping for me, and he stood beckoning at the door."

"You were not known?" said the blind man.

"I was a man who had been twenty-two years dead. No. I was not known."

"You should have kept your secret better."

"*My* secret? *Mine*? It was a secret, any breath of air could whisper at his will. The stars had it in their twinkling, the water in its flowing, the leaves in their rustling, the seasons in their return. It lurked in strangers' faces, and their voices. Everything had lips on which it always trembled—*My* secret!"

"It was revealed by your own act, at any rate," said the blind man.

"The act was not mine. I did it, but it was not mine. I was forced at times to wander round, and round, and round that spot. If you had chained me up when the fit was on me, I should have broken away, and gone there. As truly as the loadstone draws iron towards it, so he, lying at the bottom of his grave, could draw me near him when he would. Was that fancy? Did I like to go there, or did I strive and wrestle with the power that forced me?"

"**D**ON'T you think," whimpered Dennis, creeping up to him, as he stood with his feet rooted to the ground, gazing at the blank walls—"don't you think there's still a chance? It's a dreadful end; it's a terrible end for a man like me. Don't you think there's a chance? I don't mean for you, I mean for me. Don't let *him* hear us" (meaning Hugh); "he's so desperate."

"Now, then," said the officer, who had been lounging in and out with his hands in his pockets, and yawning as if he were in the last extremity for some subject of interest: "it's time to turn in, boys."

"Not yet," cried Dennis, "not yet. Not for an hour yet."

"I say,—your watch goes different from what it used to," returned the man. "Once upon a time it was always too fast. It's got the other fault now."

"My friend," cried the wretched creature, falling on his knees, "my dear friend—you always were my dear friend—there's some mistake. Some letter has been mislaid, or some messenger has been stopped upon the way. He may have fallen dead. I saw a man once fall down dead in the street, myself, and he had papers in his pocket. Send to inquire. Let somebody go to inquire. They never will hang me. They never can. Yes, they will," he cried, starting to his feet with a terrible scream. "They'll hang me by a trick, and keep the pardon back. It's a plot against me. I shall lose my life!" And uttering another yell, he fell in a fit upon the ground.

"See the hangman when it comes home to him!" cried Hugh again, as they bore him away—"Ha, ha, ha! Courage, bold Barnaby, what care we? Your hand! They do well to put us out of the world, for if we got loose a second time, we wouldn't let them off so easy, eh? Another shake! A man can die but once. If you wake in the night, sing that out lustily, and fall asleep again. Ha, ha, ha!"

Barnaby glanced once more through the grate into the empty yard; and then watched Hugh as he strode to the steps leading to his sleeping-cell. He heard him shout and burst into a roar of laughter, and saw him flourish his hat. Then he turned away himself, like one who walked in his sleep; and, without any sense of fear or sorrow, lay down on his pallet, listening for the clock to strike again.

TWO cripples—both mere boys—one with a leg of wood, one who dragged his twisted limbs along by the help of a crutch, were hanged in this same Bloomsbury Square. As the cart was about to glide from under them, it was observed that they stood with their faces from, not to, the house they had assisted to despoil; and their misery was protracted that this omission might be remedied. Another boy was hanged in Bow Street; other young lads in various quarters of the town. Four wretched women, too, were put to death. In a word, those who suffered as rioters were, for the most part, the weakest,

meanest, and most miserable among them. It was an exquisite satire upon the false religious cry which had led to so much misery, that some of these people owned themselves to be Catholics, and begged to be attended by their own priests.

One young man was hanged in Bishopsgate Street, whose aged gray-headed father waited for him at the gallows, kissed him at its foot when he arrived, and sat there on the ground, until they took him down. They would have given him the body of his child ; but he had no hearse, no coffin, nothing to remove it in, being too poor—and walked meekly away beside the cart that took it back to prison, trying as he went to touch its lifeless hand.

But the crowd had forgotten these matters, or cared little about them if they lived in their memory ; and while one great multitude fought and hustled to get near the gibbet before Newgate, for a parting look, another followed in the train of poor lost Barnaby, to swell the throng that waited for him on the spot.

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

“**N**OW, really, Fanny, my dear,” said the sister-in-law, altering her position, and speaking less confidently, and more earnestly, in spite of herself, “I shall have to be quite cross with you, if you don’t rouse yourself. It’s necessary for you to make an effort, and perhaps a very great and painful effort, which you are not disposed to make ; but this is a world of effort, you know, Fanny, and we must never yield, when so much depends upon us. Come ! Try ! I must really scold you if you don’t !”

The race in the ensuing pause was fierce and furious. The watches seemed to jostle and to trip each other up.

“Fanny !” said Louisa, glancing round with a gathering alarm. “Only look at me. Only open your eyes, to show me

that you hear and understand me ; will you ? Good Heaven, gentlemen, what is to be done ? ”

The two medical attendants exchanged a look across the bed ; and the physician, stooping down, whispered in the child's ear. Not having understood the purport of his whisper, the little creature turned her perfectly colorless face and deep, dark eyes towards him, but without loosening her hold in the least.

The whisper was repeated.

“ Mamma ! ” said the child.

The little voice, familiar and dearly loved, awakened some show of consciousness, even at that ebb. For a moment the closed eyelids trembled, and the nostril quivered, and the faintest shadow of a smile was seen.

“ Mamma ! ” cried the child, sobbing aloud. “ Oh dear mamma ! oh dear mamma ! ”

The Doctor gently brushed the scattered ringlets of the child aside from the face and mouth of the mother. Alas ! how calm they lay there ; how little breath there was to stir them !

Thus, clinging fast to that slight spar within her arms, the mother drifted out upon the dark and unknown sea that rolls round all the world.

THAT small world, like the great one out of doors, had the capacity of easily forgetting its dead ; and when the cook had said she was a quiet-tempered lady, and the house-keeper had said it was the common lot, and the butler had said who'd have thought it, and the housemaid had said she couldn't hardly believe it, and the footman had said it seemed exactly like a dream, they had quite worn the subject out, and began to think their mourning was wearing rusty too.

“ SHE'LL be quite happy, now she has come home again,” said Polly, nodding to her with an encouraging smile upon her wholesome face, “ and will be so pleased to see her dear papa to-night.”

“Lork, Mrs. Richards!” cried Miss Nipper, taking up her words with a jerk. “Don’t. See her dear papa indeed! I should like to see her do it!”

“Won’t she, then?” asked Polly.

“Lork, Mrs. Richards, no! Her pa’s a deal too wrapped up in somebody else, and before there was a somebody else to be wrapped up in she never was a favorite. Girls are thrown away in this house, Mrs. Richards, *I* assure you.”

The child looked quickly from one nurse to the other, as if she understood and felt what was said.

WHEN little Florence timidly presented herself, Mr. Dombey stopped in his pacing up and down, and looked towards her. Had he looked with greater interest, and with a father’s eye, he might have read in her keen glance the impulses and fears that made her waver; the passionate desire to run clinging to him, crying, as she hid her face in his embrace, “Oh father, try to love me! there’s no one else!” the dread of a repulse; the fear of being too bold, and of offending him; the pitiable need in which she stood of some assurance and encouragement; and how her overcharged young heart was wandering to find some natural resting-place for its sorrow and affection.

But he saw nothing of this. He saw her pause irresolutely at the door, and look towards him; and he saw no more.

“Come in,” he said, “come in; what is the child afraid of?”

She came in; and after glancing round for a moment with an uncertain air, stood pressing her small hands hard together, close within the door.

“Come here, Florence,” said her father, coldly. “Do you know who I am?”

“Yes, papa.”

“Have you nothing to say to me?”

The tears that stood in her eyes, as she raised them quickly to his face, were frozen by the expression it wore. She looked down again, and put out her trembling hand.

Mr. Dombey took it loosely in his own, and stood looking down upon her for a moment, as if he knew as little as the child what to say or do.

“There ! Be a good girl,” he said, patting her on the head, and regarding her, as it were, by stealth, with a disturbed and doubtful look. “Go to Richards ! Go !”

His little daughter hesitated for another instant, as though she would have clung about him still, or had some lingering hope that he might raise her in his arms, and kiss her. She looked up in his face once more. He thought how like her expression was then to what it had been when she looked round at the Doctor, that night, and instinctively dropped her hand, and turned away.

THE atmosphere became, or might have become, colder and colder, when Mr. Dombey stood frigidly watching his little daughter, who, clapping her hands, and standing on tiptoe before the throne of his son and heir, lured him to bend down from his high estate, and look at her. Some honest act of Richards's may have aided the effect, but he did look down, and held his peace. As his sister hid behind her nurse, he followed her with his eyes ; and when she peeped out with a merry cry to him, he sprang up and crowed lustily—laughing outright when she ran in upon him ; and seeming to fondle her curls with his tiny hands, while she smothered him with kisses.

Was Mr. Dombey pleased to see this ? He testified no pleasure by the relaxation of a nerve ; but outward tokens of any kind of feeling were unusual with him. If any sunbeam stole into the room to light the children at their play, it never reached his face. He looked on so fixedly and coldly, that the warm light vanished even from the laughing eyes of little Florence, when at last they happened to meet his.

THERE is sounder sleep and deeper rest in Mr. Dombey's house to-night, than there has been for many nights. The morning sun awakens the old household, settled

down once more in their old ways. The rosy children opposite run past with hoops. There is a splendid wedding in the church. The juggler's wife is active with the money-box in another quarter of the town. The mason sings and whistles as he chips out P-A-U-L in the marble slab before him.

And can it be that in a world so full and busy, the loss of one weak creature makes a void in any heart, so wide and deep that nothing but the width and depth of vast eternity can fill it up! Florence, in her innocent affliction, might have answered, "Oh my brother, oh my dearly loved and loving brother! Only friend and companion of my slighted childhood! Could any less idea shed the light already dawning on your early grave, or give birth to the softened sorrow that is springing into life beneath this reign of tears!"

WHEN no one in the house was stirring, and the lights were all extinguished, she would softly leave her own room, and with noiseless feet descend the staircase, and approach her father's door. Against it, scarcely breathing, she would rest her face and head, and press her lips, in the yearning of her love. She crouched upon the cold stone floor outside it, every night, to listen even for his breath; and in her one absorbing wish to be allowed to show him some affection, to be a consolation to him, to win him over to the endurance of some tenderness from her, his solitary child, she would have knelt down at his feet, if she had dared, in humble supplication.

No one knew it. No one thought of it. The door was ever closed, and he shut up within. He went out once or twice, and it was said in the house that he was very soon going on his country journey; but he lived in those rooms, and lived alone, and never saw her, or inquired for her. Perhaps he did not even know that she was in the house.

SO Florence lived in her wilderness of a home, within the circle of her innocent pursuits and thoughts, and nothing harmed her. She could go down to her father's rooms now,

and think of him, and suffer her loving heart humbly to approach him, without fear of repulse. She could look upon the objects that had surrounded him in his sorrow, and could nestle near his chair, and not dread the glance that she so well remembered. She could render him such little tokens of her duty and service, as putting everything in order for him with her own hands, binding little nosegays for his table, changing them as one by one they withered, and he did not come back, preparing something for him every day, and leaving some timid mark of her presence near his usual seat. To-day, it was a little painted stand for his watch ; to-morrow she would be afraid to leave it, and would substitute some other trifle of her making not so likely to attract his eye. Waking in the night, perhaps, she would tremble at the thought of his coming home, and angrily rejecting it, and would hurry down with slippered feet and quickly beating heart, and bring it away. At another time, she would only lay her face upon his desk, and leave a kiss there, and a tear.

AND now Florence began to think, if she were to fall ill, if she were to fade like her dear brother, would he then know that she had loved him ; would she then grow dear to him, would he come to her bedside, when she was weak and dim of sight, and take her into his embrace, and cancel all the past ? Would he so forgive her, in that changed condition, for not having been able to lay open her childish heart to him, as to make it easy to relate with what emotions she had gone out of his room that night ; what she had meant to say if she had had the courage : and how she had endeavored, afterwards, to learn the way she never knew in infancy ?

Yes, she thought if she were dying, he would relent. She thought, that if she lay, serene and not unwilling to depart, upon the bed that was curtained round with recollections of their darling boy, he would be touched home, and would say, “ Dear Florence, live for me, and we will love each other as

we might have done, and be as happy as we might have been these many years !” She thought that if she heard such words from him, and had her arms clasped round him, she could answer with a smile, “It is too late for anything but this : I never could be happier, dear father !” and so leave him, with a blessing on her lips.

FLORENCE had a new reason in all this for wishing to be at home again. Her lonely life was better suited to her course of timid hope and doubt : and she feared sometimes, that in her absence she might miss some hopeful chance of testifying her affection to her father. Heaven knows, she might have set her mind at rest, poor child ! on this last point ; but her slighted love was fluttering within her, and, even in her sleep, it flew away in dreams, and nestled, like a wandering bird come home, upon her father’s neck.

WHEN Rob had turned in, and was fast asleep, the Captain trimmed the candle, put on his spectacles—he had felt it appropriate to take to spectacles on entering into the Instrument Trade, though his eyes were like a hawk’s—and opened the prayer-book at the Burial Service. And reading softly to himself, in the little back parlor, and stopping now and then to wipe his eyes, the Captain, in a true and simple spirit, committed Walter’s body to the deep.

FLORENCE, being in an arbor in the garden one warm morning, musingly observant of a youthful group upon the turf, through some intervening boughs, and wreathing flowers for the head of one little creature among them who was the pet and plaything of the rest, heard the same lady and her niece, in pacing up and down a sheltered nook close by, speak of herself.

"Is Florence an orphan like me?" said the child.

"No, my love. She has no mother, but her father is living."

"Is she in mourning for her poor mamma, now?" inquired the child quickly.

"No; for her only brother."

"Has she no other brother?"

"None."

"No sister?"

"None."

"I am very, very sorry!" said the little girl.

As they stopped soon afterwards to watch some boats, and had been silent in the meantime, Florence, who had arisen when she heard her name, and had gathered up her flowers to go and meet them that they might know of her being within hearing, resumed her seat and work, expecting to hear no more; but the conversation recommenced next moment.

"Florence is a favorite with every one here, and deserves to be, I am sure," said the child, earnestly. "Where is her papa?"

The aunt replied, after a moment's pause, that she did not know. Her tone of voice arrested Florence, who had started from her seat again, and held her fastened to the spot, with her work hastily caught up to her bosom, and her two hands saving it from being scattered on the ground.

"He is in England, I hope, aunt?" said the child.

"I believe so. Yes; I know he is, indeed."

"Has he ever been here?"

"I believe not. No."

"Is he coming here to see her?"

"I believe not."

"Is he lame, or blind, or ill, aunt?" asked the child.

The flowers that Florence held to her breast began to fall when she heard those words, so wonderingly spoken. She held them closer; and her face hung down upon them.

"Kate," said the lady, after another moment of silence, "I will tell you the whole truth about Florence as I have heard it,

and believe it to be. Tell no one else, my dear, because it may be little known here, and your doing so would give her pain."

"I never will!" exclaimed the child.

"I know you never will," returned the lady. "I can trust you as myself. I fear then, Kate, that Florence's father cares little for her, very seldom sees her, never was kind to her in her life, and now quite shuns her and avoids her. She would love him dearly if he would suffer her, but he will not—though for no fault of hers; and she is greatly to be loved and pitied by all gentle hearts."

More of the flowers that Florence held fell scattering on the ground; those that remained were wet, but not with dew; and her face dropped upon her laden hands.

"Poor Florence! Dear, good Florence!" cried the child.

"Do you know why I have told you this, Kate?" said the lady.

"That I may be very kind to her, and take great care to try to please her. Is that the reason, aunt?"

"Partly," said the lady, "but not all. Though we see her so cheerful, with a pleasant smile for every one, ready to oblige us all, and bearing her part in every amusement here: she can hardly be quite happy; do you think she can, Kate?"

"I am afraid not," said the little girl.

"And you can understand," pursued the lady, "why her observation of children who have parents who are fond of them, and proud of them—like many here, just now—should make her sorrowful in secret?"

"Yes, dear aunt," said the child, "I understand that very well. Poor Florence!"

More flowers strayed upon the ground, and those she yet held to her breast trembled, as if a wintry wind were rustling them.

"My Kate," said the lady, whose voice was serious, but very calm and sweet, and had so impressed Florence from the first moment of her hearing it, "of all the youthful people here, you

are her natural and harmless friend ; you have not the innocent means, that happier children have—”

“ There are none happier, aunt ! ” exclaimed the child, who seemed to cling about her.

—“ As other children have, dear Kate, of reminding her of her misfortune. Therefore I would have you, when you try to be her little friend, try all the more for that, and feel that the bereavement you sustained—thank Heaven ! before you knew its weight—gives you claim and hold upon poor Florence.”

“ But I am not without a parent’s love, aunt, and I never have been,” said the child, “ with you.”

“ However that may be, my dear,” returned the lady, “ your misfortune is a lighter one than Florence’s ; for not an orphan in the wide world can be so deserted as the child who is an outcast from a living parent’s love.”

The flowers were scattered on the ground like dust ; the empty hands were spread upon the face ; and orphaned Florence, shrinking down upon the ground, wept long and bitterly.

“ **I** FEEL no tenderness towards you ; that you know. You would care nothing for it, if I did or could. I know as well that you feel none towards me. But we are linked together ; and in the knot that ties us, as I have said, others are bound up. We must both die ; we are both connected with the dead already, each by a little child. Let us forbear.”

Mr. Dombey took a long respiration, as if he would have said, Oh ! was *this* all !

“ There is no wealth,” she went on, turning paler as she watched him, while her eyes grew yet more lustrous in their earnestness, “ that could buy these words of me, and the meaning that belongs to them. Once cast away as idle breath, no wealth or power can bring them back. I mean them ; I have weighed them ; and I will be true to what I undertake. If you will promise to forbear on your part, I will promise to forbear on mine. We are a most unhappy pair, in whom, from

different causes, every sentiment that blesses marriage, or justifies it, is rooted out ; but in the course of time, some friendship, or some fitness for each other, may arise between us. I will try to hope so, if you will make the endeavor too ; and I will look forward to a better and a happier use of age than I have made of youth or prime."

THE barrier between Mr. Dombey and his wife was not weakened by time. Ill-assorted couple, unhappy in themselves and in each other, bound together by no tie but the manacle that joined their fettered hands, and straining that so harshly, in their shrinking asunder, that it wore and chafed to the bone, Time, consoler of affliction and softener of anger, could do nothing to help them. Their pride, however different in kind and object, was equal in degree ; and, in their flinty opposition, struck out fire between them which might smoulder or might blaze, as circumstances were, but burned up everything within their mutual reach, and made their marriage-way a road of ashes.

YIELDING at once to the impulse of her affection, timid at all other times, but bold in its truth to him in his adversity, and undaunted by past repulse, Florence, dressed as she was, hurried downstairs. As she set her light foot in the hall, he came out of his room. She hastened toward him unchecked, with her arms stretched out, and crying "Oh dear, dear papa !" as if she would have clasped him round the neck.

And so she would have done. But in his frenzy, he lifted up his cruel arm, and struck her, crosswise, with that heaviness, that she tottered on the marble floor : and as he dealt the blow, he told her what Edith was, and bade her follow her, since they had always been in league.

She did not sink down at his feet ; she did not shut out the

sight of him with her trembling hands ; she did not weep ; she did not utter one word of reproach. But she looked at him, and a cry of desolation issued from her heart. For, as she looked, she saw him murdering that fond idea to which she had held in spite of him. She saw his cruelty, neglect, and hatred dominant above it, and stamping it down. She saw she had no father upon earth, and ran out, orphaned, from his house.

“**A** MOMENT yet. Lay my head so, dear, that as you read I may see the words in your kind face.”

Harriet complied and read—read the eternal book for all the weary and the heavy-laden ; for all the wretched, fallen, and neglected of this earth—read the blessed history, in which the blind, lame, palsied beggar, the criminal, the woman stained with shame, the shunned of all our dainty clay, has each a portion, that no human pride, indifference, or sophistry, through all the ages that this world shall last, can take away, or by the thousandth atom of a grain reduce—read the ministry of Him who, through the round of human life, and all its hopes and griefs, from birth to death, from infancy to age, had sweet compassion for, and interest in, its every scene and stage, its every suffering and sorrow.

“I shall come,” said Harriet, when she shut the book, “very early in the morning.”

The lustrous eyes, yet fixed upon her face, closed for a moment, then opened ; and Alice kissed and blessed her.

The same eyes followed her to the door ; and in their light, and on the tranquil face, there was a smile when it was closed.

They never turned away. She laid her hand upon her breast, murmuring the sacred name that had been read to her ; and life passed from her face, like light removed.

Nothing lay there any longer, but the ruin of the mortal house on which the rain had beaten, and the black hair that had fluttered in the wintry wind.

HE was fallen, never to be raised up any more. For the night of his worldly ruin there was no to-morrow's sun ; for the stain of his domestic shame there was no purification ; nothing, thank Heaven, could bring his dead child back to life. But that which he might have made so different in all the Past --which might have made the Past itself so different, though this he hardly thought of now--that which was his own work, that which he could so easily have wrought into a blessing, and had set himself so steadily for years to form into a curse--that was the sharp grief of his soul.

Oh ! He did remember it ! The rain that fell upon the roof, the wind that mourned outside the door that night, had had foreknowledge in their melancholy sound. He knew, now, what he had done. He knew, now, that he had called down that upon his head which bowed it lower than the heaviest stroke of fortune. He knew, now, what it was to be rejected and deserted ; now, when every loving blossom he had withered in his innocent daughter's heart was snowing down in ashes on him.

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

“**T**HEN come with me,” said Mrs. Sowerberry, taking up a dim and dirty lamp, and leading the way upstairs ; “your bed’s under the counter. You don’t mind sleeping among the coffins, I suppose ? But it doesn’t much matter whether you do or don’t, for you can’t sleep anywhere else. Come, don’t keep me here all night !”

Oliver lingered no longer, but meekly followed his new mistress.

OLIVER being left to himself in the undertaker’s shop, set the lamp down on a workman’s bench, and gazed timidly about him with a feeling of awe and dread, which many

people a good deal older than he will be at no loss to understand. An unfinished coffin on black trestles, which stood in the middle of the shop, looked so gloomy and death-like, that a cold tremble came over him every time his eyes wandered in the direction of the dismal object ; from which he almost expected to see some frightful form slowly rear its head, to drive him mad with terror. Against the wall were ranged, in regular array, a long row of elm boards cut into the same shape ; looking in the dim light, like high-shouldered ghosts with their hands in their breeches-pockets. Coffin-plates, elm-chips, bright-headed nails, and shreds of black cloth lay scattered on the floor ; and the wall behind the counter was ornamented with a lively representation of two mutes in very stiff neck-cloths, on duty at a large private door, with a hearse drawn by four black steeds approaching in the distance. The shop was close and hot ; and the atmosphere seemed tainted with the smell of coffins. The recess beneath the counter in which his flock mattress was thrust, looked like a grave.

Nor were these the only dismal feelings which depressed Oliver. He was alone in a strange place ; and we all know how chilled and desolate the best of us will sometimes feel in such a situation. The boy had no friends to care for, or to care for him. The regret of no recent separation was fresh in his mind ; the absence of no loved and well-remembered face sunk heavily into his heart. But his heart *was* heavy, notwithstanding ; and he wished, as he crept into his narrow bed, that that were his coffin ; and that he could be laid in a calm and lasting sleep in the churchyard ground, with the tall grass waving gently above his head, and the sound of the old deep bell to soothe him in his sleep.

“**I**S Oliver abed? I want to speak to him,” was his first remark as they descended the stairs.

“Hours ago,” replied the Dodger, throwing open a door.

“Here he is !”

The boy was lying, fast asleep, on a rude bed upon the floor ; so pale with anxiety, and sadness, and the closeness of his prison, that he looked like death ; not death as it shows in shroud and coffin, but in the guise it wears when life has just departed ; when a young and gentle spirit has, but an instant, fled to heaven, and the gross air of the world has not had time to breathe upon the changing dust it hallowed.

“Not now,” said the Jew, turning softly away. “To-morrow. To-morrow.”

“**W**HAT'S the matter with you, parochial Dick ?” inquired Mr. Bumble with well-timed jocularly.

“Nothing, sir,” replied the child faintly.

“I should think not,” said Mrs. Mann, who had of course laughed very much at Mr. Bumble's humor. “You want for nothing, I'm sure.”

“I should like—” faltered the child.

“Hey-day !” interposed Mrs. Mann, “I suppose you're going to say that you *do* want for something, now ? Why, you little wretch—”

“Stop, Mrs. Mann, stop !” said the beadle, raising his hand with a show of authority. “Like what, sir ; eh ?”

“I should like,” faltered the child, “if somebody that can write would put a few words down for me on a piece of paper, and fold it up and seal it, and keep it for me, after I am laid in the ground.”

“Why what does the boy mean !” exclaimed Mr. Bumble, on whom the earnest manner and wan aspect of the child had made some impression, accustomed as he was to such things. “What do you mean, sir ?”

“I should like,” said the child, “to leave my dear love to poor Oliver Twist ; and to let him know how often I have sat by myself and cried to think of his wandering about in the dark nights with nobody to help him. And I should like to tell him,” said the child, pressing his small hands together, and

speaking with great fervor, "that I was glad to die when I was very young ; for, perhaps, if I had lived to be a man, and had grown old, my little sister, who is in Heaven, might forget me, or be unlike me, and it would be so much happier if we were both children there together."

THE honest gentleman held the curtain in his hand, and looked on for a minute or so, in silence. While he was watching the patient thus, the younger lady glided softly past ; and seating herself in a chair by the bedside, gathered Oliver's hair from his face. As she stooped over him her tears fell upon his forehead.

The boy stirred, and smiled in his sleep, as though these marks of pity and compassion had awakened some pleasant dream of love and affection he had never known. Thus, a strain of gentle music, or the rippling of water in a silent place, or the odor of a flower, or even the mention of a familiar word, will sometimes call up sudden dim remembrances of scenes that never were, in this life ; which vanish like a breath ; which some-brief memory of a happier existence, long gone by, would seem to have awakened ; which no voluntary exertion of the mind can ever recall.

"What can this mean?" exclaimed the elder lady. "This poor child can never have been the pupil of robbers !"

"Vice," sighed the surgeon, replacing the curtain, "takes up her abode in many temples ; and who can say that a fair outside shall not enshrine her ?"

"But at so early an age !" urged Rose.

"My dear young lady," rejoined the surgeon, mournfully shaking his head ; "crime, like death, is not confined to the old and withered alone. The youngest and fairest are too often its chosen victims."

"But can you—oh ! can you really believe that this delicate boy has been the voluntary associate of the worst outcasts of society ?" said Rose.

The surgeon shook his head, in a manner which intimated that he feared it was very possible ; and observing that they might disturb the patient, led the way into an adjoining apartment.

“But even if he has been wicked,” pursued Rose, “think how young he is ; think that he may never have known a mother’s love, or the comfort of a home ; and that ill-usage and blows, or the want of bread, may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt. Aunt, dear aunt, for mercy’s sake, think of this, before you let them drag this sick child to a prison, which in any case must be the grave of all his chances of amendment. Oh ! as you love me, and know that I have never felt the want of parents in your goodness and affection, but that I might have done so, and might have been equally helpless and unprotected with this poor child, have pity upon him before it is too late !”

ANOTHER morning. The sun shone brightly ; as brightly as if it looked upon no misery or care ; and, with every leaf and flower in full bloom about her ; with life, and health, and sounds and sights of joy, surrounding her on every side—the fair young creature lay, wasting fast. Oliver crept away to the old churchyard, and sitting down on one of the green mounds, wept and prayed for her, in silence.

There was such peace and beauty in the scene ; so much of brightness and mirth in the sunny landscape ; such blithesome music in the songs of the summer birds ; such freedom in the rapid flight of the rook, careering overhead ; so much of life and joyousness in all ; that, when the boy raised his aching eyes, and looked about, the thought instinctively occurred to him, that this was not a time for death ; that Rose could surely never die when humbler things were all so glad and gay ; that graves were for cold and cheerless winter, not for sunlight and fragrance. He almost thought that shrouds were for the old and shrunken, and that they never wrapped the young and graceful form within their ghastly folds.

A knell from the church-bell broke harshly on these youth-

ful thoughts. Another! Again! It was tolling for the funeral service. A group of humble mourners entered the gate, wearing white favors, for the corpse was young. They stood uncovered by a grave; and there was a mother—a mother once—among the weeping train. But the sun shone brightly, and the birds sang on.

IN a paroxysm of fear, the boy closed the book, and thrust it from him. Then, falling upon his knees, he prayed Heaven to spare him from such deeds; and rather to will that he should die at once, than be reserved for crimes so fearful and appalling. By degrees he grew more calm, and besought, in a low and broken voice, that he might be rescued from his present dangers; and that if any aid could be raised up for a poor outcast boy, who had never known the love of friends or kindred, it might come to him now, when, desolate and deserted, he stood alone in the midst of wickedness and guilt.

FROM BLEAK HOUSE.

JO is in a sleep or in a stupor to-day, and Allan Woodcourt, newly arrived, stands by him, looking down upon his wasted form. After a while he softly seats himself upon the bedside with his face towards him—just as he sat in the law-writer's room—and touches his chest and heart. The cart had very nearly given up, but labors on a little more.

The trooper stands in the doorway, still and silent. Phil has stopped in a low, clinking noise, with his little hammer in his hand. Mr. Woodcourt looks round with that grave professional interest and attention on his face, and, glancing significantly at the trooper, signs to Phil to carry his table out. When the little hammer is next used, there will be a speck of rust upon it.

"Well, Jo! What is the matter? Don't be frightened."

"I thought," says Jo, who has started, and is looking round, "I thought I was in Tom-all-Alone's agin. Ain't there nobody here but you, Mr. Woodcot?"

"Nobody."

"And I ain't took back to Tom-all-Alone's. Am I, sir?"

"No." Jo closes his eyes, muttering, "I'm wery thankful."

After watching him closely a little while, Allan puts his mouth very near his ear, and says to him in a low, distinct voice:

"Jo! Did you ever know a prayer?"

"Never knowd nothink, sir."

"Not so much as one short prayer?"

"No, sir. Nothink at all. Mr. Chadbands he wos a-prayin wunst at Mr. Sangsby's and I heerd him, but he sounded as if he wos a-speakin' to hissself, and not to me. He prayed a lot, but *I* couldn't make out nothink on it. Different times, there wos other genlmen come down Tom-all-Alone's a-prayin, but they all mostly sed as the t'other wuns prayed wrong, and all mostly sounded to be a-talking to theirselves, or a-passing blame on the t'others, and not a-talkin to us. *We* never knowd nothink. *I* never knowd what it wos all about."

It takes him a long time to say this; and few but an experienced and attentive listener could hear, or, hearing, understand him. After a short relapse into a sleep or stupor, he makes, of a sudden, a strong effort to get out of bed.

"Stay, Jo! What now?"

"It's time for me to go to that there berryin-ground, sir," he returns with a wild look.

"Lie down, and tell me. What burying-ground, Jo?"

"Where they laid him as wos wery good to me, wery good to me indeed, he wos. It's time fur me to go down to that there berryin-ground, sir, and ask to be put along with him. I wants to go there and be berried. He used fur to say to me, 'I am as poor as you to-day, Jo,' he ses. I wants to tell him that I am as poor as him now, and have come there to be laid along with him."

"By and by, Jo. By and by."

"Ah! P'raps they wouldn't do it if I wos to go myself. But will you promise to have me took there, sir, and laid along with him?"

"I will, indeed."

"Thank'ee, sir. Thank'ee, sir. They'll have to get the key of the gate afore they can take me in, for it's allus locked. And there's a step there, as I used for to clean with my broom.—It's turned verry dark, sir. Is there any light a-comin?"

"It is coming fast, Jo."

Fast. The cart is shaken all to pieces, and the rugged road is very near its end.

"Jo, my poor fellow!"

"I hear you, sir, in the dark, but I'm a-gropin—a-gropin—let me catch hold of your hand."

"Jo, can you say what I say?"

"I'll say anythink as you say, sir, for I knows it's good."

"OUR FATHER."

"Our Father!—yes, that's very good, sir."

"WHICH ART IN HEAVEN."

"Art in Heaven—is the light a-comin, sir?"

"It is close at hand. HALLOWED BE THY NAME!"

"Hallowed be—thy—"

The light is come upon the dark benighted way. Dead!

Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead, Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead, men and women, born with heavenly compassion in your hearts. And dying thus around us every day.

"**I** SEE him at his worst, every day. I watch him in his sleep. I know every change of his face. But when I married Richard, I was quite determined, Esther, if Heaven would help me, never to show him that I grieved for what he did, and so to make him more unhappy. I want him, when he comes home, to find no trouble in my face. I want him, when

he looks at me, to see what he loved in me. I married him to do this, and this supports me."

I felt her trembling more. I waited for what was yet to come, and I now thought I began to know what it was.

"And something else supports me, Esther."

She stopped a minute. Stopped speaking only ; her hand was still in motion.

"I look forward a little while, and I don't know what great aid may come to me. When Richard turns his eyes upon me then, there may be something lying on my breast more eloquent than I have been, with greater power than mine to show him his true course, and win him back."

Her hand stopped now. She clasped me in her arms, and I clasped her in mine.

"If that little creature should fail too, Esther, I still look forward. I look forward a long while, through years and years, and think that then, when I am growing old, or when I am dead perhaps, a beautiful woman, his daughter, happily married, may be proud of him and a blessing to him. Or that a generous brave man, as handsome as he used to be, as hopeful, and far more happy, may walk in the sunshine with him, honoring his gray head, and saying to himself, 'I thank God this is my father! ruined by a fatal inheritance, and restored through me!'"

O, my sweet girl, what a heart was that which beat so fast against me!

"These hopes uphold me, my dear Esther, and I know they will. Though sometimes even they depart from me, before a dread that arises when I look at Richard."

I tried to cheer my darling, and asked her what it was? Sobbing and weeping, she replied:

"That he may not live to see his child."

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

“**I** AM afraid, sir,” said Mr. Pickwick, laying his hand gently and compassionately on his arm; “I am afraid you will have to live in some noisy, crowded place. Now, pray, consider this room your own, when you want quiet, or when any of your friends come to see you.”

“Friends!” interposed the man, in a voice which rattled in his throat. “If I lay dead at the bottom of the deepest mine in the world; tight screwed down and soldered in my coffin: rotting in the dark and filthy ditch that drags its slime along, beneath the foundations of this prison—I could not be more forgotten or unheeded than I am here. I am a dead man; dead to society, without the pity they bestow on those whose souls have passed to judgment. Friends to see *me*! My God! I have sunk, from the prime of life into old age, in this place, and there is not one to raise his hand above my bed when I lie dead upon it, and say, ‘It is a blessing he is gone!’”

THE sick man laid his hand upon his attendant’s arm, and motioned him to stop. He closed the book, and laid it on the bed.

“Open the window,” said the sick man.

He did so. The noise of carriages and carts, the rattle of wheels, the cries of men and boys, all the busy sounds of a mighty multitude instinct with life and occupation, blended into one deep murmur, floated into the room. Above the hoarse, loud hum arose from time to time a boisterous laugh; or a scrap of some jingling song, shouted forth, by one of the giddy crowd, would strike upon the ear for an instant, and then be lost amidst the roar of voices and the tramp of footsteps; the breaking of the billows of the restless sea of life, that rolled heavily on, without. Melancholy sounds to a quiet listener at any time; how melancholy to the watcher by the bed of death!

“There is no air here,” said the sick man, faintly. “The place pollutes it. It was fresh round about, when I walked there, years ago ; but it grows hot and heavy in passing these walls. I cannot breathe it.”

“We have breathed it together for a long time,” said the old man. “Come, come.”

There was a short silence, during which the two spectators approached the bed. The sick man drew a hand of his old fellow-prisoner towards him, and pressing it affectionately between both his own, retained it in his grasp.

“I hope,” he gasped after a while—so faintly that they bent their ears close over the bed to catch the half-formed sounds his pale lips gave vent to—“I hope my merciful Judge will bear in mind my heavy punishment on earth. Twenty years, my friend, twenty years in this hideous grave ! My heart broke when my child died, and I could not even kiss him in his little coffin. My loneliness since then, in all this noise and riot, has been very dreadful. May God forgive me ! He has seen my solitary, lingering death.”

He folded his hands, and murmuring something more they could not hear, fell into a sleep—only a sleep at first, for they saw him smile.

They whispered together for a little time, and the turnkey, stooping over the pillow, drew hastily back. “He has got his discharge, by G— !” said the man.

He had. But he had grown so like death in life, that they knew not when he died.

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

“THE very house I live in,” sighed the poor gentleman, “may be taken from me to-morrow. Not an article of my old furniture, but will be sold to strangers !”

The last reflection hurt him so much, that he took at once to his bed, apparently resolved to keep that, at all events.

"Cheer up, sir!" said the apothecary.

"You musn't let yourself be cast down, sir," said the nurse.

"Such things happen every day," remarked the lawyer.

"And it is very sinful to rebel against them," whispered the clergyman.

"And what no man with a family ought to do," added the neighbors.

Mr. Nickleby shook his head, and motioning them all out of the room, embraced his wife and children, and having pressed them by turns to his languidly beating heart, sunk exhausted on his pillow. They were concerned to find that his reason went astray after this; for he babbled for a long time about the generosity and goodness of his brother, and the merry old times when they were at school together. This fit of wandering past, he solemnly commended them to One who never deserted the widow or her fatherless children, and smiling gently on them, turned upon his face, and observed that he thought he could fall asleep.

A LADY in deep mourning rose as Mr. Ralph Nickleby entered, but appeared incapable of advancing to meet him, and leant upon the arm of a slight but very beautiful girl of about seventeen, who had been sitting by her. A youth, who appeared a year or two older, stepped forward and saluted Ralph as his uncle.

"Oh!" growled Ralph, with an ill-favored frown; "you are Nicholas, I suppose."

"That is my name, sir," replied the youth.

"Put my hat down!" said Ralph, imperiously. "Well, ma'am, how do you do?" You must bear up against sorrow, ma'am; *I* always do."

"Mine was no common loss," said Mrs. Nickleby, applying her handkerchief to her eyes.

"It was no *uncommon* loss, ma'am," returned Ralph, as he coolly unbuttoned his spencer. "Husbands die every day, ma'am, and wives too."

"And brothers also, sir," said Nicholas, with a glance of indignation.

"Yes, sir, and puppies and pug-dogs likewise," replied his uncle, taking a chair. "You didn't mention in your letter what my brother's complaint was, ma'am."

"The doctors could attribute it to no particular disease," said Mrs. Nickleby, shedding tears. "We have too much reason to fear that he died of a broken heart."

"Pooh!" said Ralph; "there's no such thing. I can understand a man's dying of a broken neck, or suffering from a broken arm, or a broken head, or a broken leg, or a broken nose; but a broken heart!—nonsense, it's the cant of the day. If a man can't pay his debts he dies of a broken heart, and his widow's a martyr."

"Some people, I believe, have no hearts to break," observed Nicholas quietly.

"How old is this boy, for God's sake?" inquired Ralph, wheeling back his chair, and surveying his nephew from head to foot with intense scorn.

"Nicholas is very nearly nineteen," replied the widow.

"Nineteen, eh?" said Ralph. "And what do you mean to do for your bread, sir?"

"Not to live upon my mother," replied Nicholas, his heart swelling as he spoke.

"You'd have little enough to live upon, if you did," retorted the uncle, eying him contemptuously.

"Whatever it be," said Nicholas, flushed with anger, "I shall not look to you to make it more."

"Nicholas, my dear, recollect yourself," remonstrated Mrs. Nickleby.

"Dear Nicholas, pray," urged the young lady.

"Hold your tongue, sir," said Ralph. "Upon my word! Fine beginnings, Mrs. Nickleby—fine beginnings!"

A VAST deal of searching and rummaging ensued, and it proving fruitless, SMIKE was called in, and pushed by Mrs. Squeers, and boxed by Mr. Squeers ; which course of treatment brightening his intellects, enabled him to suggest that possibly Mrs. Squeers might have the spoon in her pocket, as indeed turned out to be the case. As Mrs. Squeers had previously protested, however, that she was quite certain she had not got it, SMIKE received another box on the ear for presuming to contradict his mistress, together with a promise of a sound thrashing if he were not more respectful in future ; so that he took nothing very advantageous by his motion.

ONE of these expeditions led them through the church-yard where was his father's grave. "Even here," said Nicholas, softly, "we used to loiter, before we knew what death was, and when we little thought whose ashes would rest beneath ; and, wondering at the silence, sit down to rest and speak below our breath. Once, Kate was lost, and after an hour of fruitless search, they found her fast asleep under that tree which shades my father's grave. He was very fond of her, and said when he took her up in his arms, still sleeping, that whenever he died he would wish to be buried where his dear little child had laid her head. You see his wish was not forgotten."

Nothing more passed at the time ; but that night, as Nicholas sat beside his bed, SMIKE started from what had seemed to be a slumber, and laying his hand in his, prayed, as the tears coursed down his face, that he would make him one solemn promise.

"What is that ?" said Nicholas, kindly. "If I can redeem it, or hope to do so, you know I will."

"I am sure you will," was the reply. "Promise me that when I die, I shall be buried near—as near as they can make my grave—to the tree we saw to-day."

Nicholas gave the promise ; he had few words to give it in, but they were solemn and earnest. His poor friend kept his hand in his, and turned as if to sleep. But there were stifled

sobs ; and the hand was pressed more than once, or twice, or thrice, before he sank to rest, and slowly loosed his hold.

ON a fine, mild autumn day, when all was tranquil and at peace, when the soft, sweet air crept in at the open window of the quiet room, and not a sound was heard but the gentle rustling of the leaves, Nicholas sat in his old place by the bedside, and knew that the time was nearly come. So very still it was, that every now and then he bent down his ear to listen for the breathing of him who lay asleep, as if to assure himself that life was still there, and that he had not fallen into that deep slumber from which on earth there is no waking.

While he was thus employed, the closed eyes opened, and on the pale face there came a placid smile.

“That’s well,” said Nicholas. “The sleep has done you good.”

“I have had such pleasant dreams,” was the answer. “Such pleasant, happy dreams !”

“Of what ?” said Nicholas.

The dying boy turned towards him, and, putting his arm about his neck, made answer, “I shall soon be there !”

After a short silence he spoke again.

“I am not afraid to die,” he said, “I am quite contented. I almost think that if I could rise from this bed quite well, I would not wish to do so, now. You have so often told me we shall meet again—so very often lately, and now I feel the truth of that so strongly—that I can even bear to part from you.”

The trembling voice and tearful eye, and the closer grasp of the arm which accompanied these latter words, showed how they filled the speaker’s heart ; nor were there wanting indications of how deeply they had touched the heart of him to whom they were addressed.

“You say well,” returned Nicholas, at length, “and comfort me very much, dear fellow. Let me hear you say you are happy, if you can.”

“You must tell me something first. I should not have a

secret from you. You will not blame me at a time like this, I know."

"I blame you!" exclaimed Nicholas.

"I am sure you will not. You asked me why I was so changed and—and sat so much alone. Shall I tell you why?"

"Not if it pains you," said Nicholas. "I only asked that I might make you happier, if I could."

"I know. I felt that at the time." He drew his friend closer to him. "You will forgive me; I could not help it; but though I would have died to make her happy, it broke my heart to see—I know he loves her dearly—oh! who could find that out so soon as I?"

The words which followed were feebly and faintly uttered, and broken by long pauses; but from them Nicholas learnt, for the first time, that the dying boy, with all the ardor of a nature concentrated on one absorbing, hopeless, secret passion, loved his sister Kate.

He had procured a lock of her hair, which hung at his breast, folden in one or two slight ribands she had worn. He prayed that when he was dead, Nicholas would take it off, so that no eyes but his might see it, and that when he was laid in his coffin and about to be placed in the earth, he would hang it round his neck again, that it might rest with him in the grave.

Upon his knees, Nicholas gave him this pledge, and promised again that he should rest in the spot he had pointed out. They embraced and kissed each other on the cheek.

"Now," he murmured, "I am happy."

He fell into a light slumber, and waking, smiled as before; then, spoke of beautiful gardens, which he said stretched out before him, and were filled with figures of men, women, and many children, all with light upon their faces; then whispered that it was Eden—and so died.

THE grass was green above the dead boy's grave, and trodden by feet so small and light, that not a daisy drooped its head beneath their pressure. Through all the

spring and summer-time, garlands of fresh flowers, wreathed by infant hands, rested on the stone ; and, when the children came here to change them lest they should wither and be pleasant to him no longer, their eyes filled with tears, and they spoke low and softly of their poor dead cousin.

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

“**D**AVID COPPERFIELD,” said Mrs. Creakle, leading me to a sofa, and sitting down beside me. “I want to speak to you very particularly. I have something to tell you, my child.”

Mr. Creakle, at whom of course I looked, shook his head without looking at me, and stopped up a sigh with a very large piece of buttered toast.

“You are too young to know how the world changes every day,” said Mrs. Creakle, “and how the people in it pass away. But we all have to learn it, David ; some of us when we are young, some of us when we are old, some of us at all times of our lives.”

I looked at her earnestly.

“When you came away from home at the end of the vacation,” said Mrs. Creakle, after a pause, “were they all well ?” After another pause, “Was your mamma well ?”

I trembled without distinctly knowing why, and still looked at her earnestly, making no attempt to answer.

“Because,” said she, “I grieve to tell you that I hear this morning your mamma is very ill.”

A mist rose between Mrs. Creakle and me, and her figure seemed to move in it for an instant. Then I felt the burning tears run down my face, and it was steady again.

“She is very dangerously ill,” she added.

I knew all now.

"She is dead."

There was no need to tell me so. I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world.

SHE gave me one piece of intelligence which affected me very much; namely, that there had been a sale of the furniture at our old home, and that Mr. and Miss Murdstone were gone away, and the house was shut up, to be let or sold. God knows I had no part in it while they remained there, but it pained me to think of the dear old place as altogether abandoned; of the weeds growing tall in the garden, and the fallen leaves lying thick and wet upon the paths. I imagined how the winds of winter would howl round it, how the cold rain would beat upon the window-glass, how the moon would make ghosts on the walls of the empty rooms, watching their solitude all night. I thought afresh of the grave in the churchyard, underneath the tree: and it seemed as if the house were dead too, now, and all connected with my father and mother were faded away.

I WAS up with the dull dawn, and having dressed as quietly as I could, looked into his room. He was fast asleep, lying easily, with his head upon his arm, as I had often seen him lie at school.

The time came in its season, and that was very soon, when I almost wondered that nothing troubled his repose, as I looked at him. But he slept—let me think of him so again—as I had often seen him sleep at school; and thus, in this silent hour, I left him.

—Nevermore, oh God, forgive you, Steerforth! to touch that passive hand in love and friendship. Never, nevermore!

HE was lying with his head and shoulders out of bed in an uncomfortable attitude, half resting on the box which had cost him so much pain and trouble. I learned that when

he was past creeping out of bed to open it, and past assuring himself of its safety, by means of the divining rod I had seen him use, he had required to have it placed on the chair at the bedside, where he had ever since embraced it, night and day. His arm lay on it now. Time and the world were slipping from beneath him, but the box was there; and the last words he had uttered were (in an explanatory tone) "Old clothes!"

"Barkis, my dear!" said Peggotty, almost cheerfully: bending over him, while her brother and I stood at the bed's foot. "Here's my dear boy—my dear boy, Master Davy, who brought us together, Barkis! That you sent messages by, you know! Won't you speak to Master Davy?"

He was as mute and senseless as the box from which his form derived the only expression it had.

"He's a-going out with the tide," said Mr. Peggotty to me, behind his hand.

My eyes were dim, and so were Mr. Peggotty's; but I repeated in a whisper, "With the tide?"

"People can't die along the coast," said Mr. Peggotty, "except when the tide's pretty nigh out. They can't be born, unless it's pretty nigh in—not properly born, till flood. He's a-going out with the tide. It's ebb at half-arter three, slack water half an hour. If he lives 'till it turns, he'll hold his own till past the flood, and go out with the next tide."

We remained there, watching him, a long time—hours. What mysterious influence my presence had upon him in that state of his senses, I shall not pretend to say; but when he at last began to wander feebly, it is certain he was muttering about driving me to school.

"He's coming to himself," said Peggotty.

Mr. Peggoty touched me, and whispered with much awe and reverence, "They are both a-going out fast."

"Barkis, my dear!" said Peggotty.

"C. P. Barkis," he cried faintly. "No better woman anywhere!"

"Look! Here's Master Davy!" said Peggotty. For he now opened his eyes.

I was on the point of asking him if he knew me, when he tried to stretch out his arm, and said to me distinctly, with a pleasant smile :

"Barkis is willin'!"

And, it being low water, he went out with the tide.

IT was only Ham. The night should have turned more wet since I came in, for he had a large sou'wester hat on, slouched over his face.

"Wheer's Em'ly?" said Mr. Peggotty.

Ham made a motion with his head, as if she were outside. Mr. Peggotty took the light from the window, trimmed it, put it on the table, and was busily stirring the fire, when Ham, who had not moved, said :

"Mas'r Davy, will you come out a minute, and see what Em'ly and me has got to show you?"

We went out. As I passed him at the door, I saw, to my astonishment and fright, that he was deadly pale. He pushed me hastily into the open air, and closed the door upon us. Only upon us two.

"Ham! what's the matter?"

"Mas'r Davy!—" Oh, for his broken heart, how dreadfully he wept!

I was paralyzed by the sight of such grief. I don't know what I thought or what I dreaded. I could only look at him.

"Ham! Poor, good fellow! For Heaven's sake, tell me what's the matter!"

"My love, Mas'r Davy—the pride and hope of my art—her that I'd have died for, and would die for now—she's gone!"

"Gone!"

"Em'ly's run away! Oh, Mas'r Davy, think *how* she's run away, when I pray my good and gracious God to kill her (her that is so dear above all things) sooner than let her come to ruin and disgrace!"

The face he turned up to the troubled sky, the quivering of his clasped hands, the agony of his figure, remain associated with that lonely waste, in my remembrance, to this hour. It is always night there, and he is the only object in the scene.

“**E**VERY night,” said Mr. Peggotty, “as reg’lar as the night comes, the candle must be stood in its old pane of glass, that if ever she should see it, it may seem to say, ‘Come back, my child, come back!’ If ever there’s a knock, Ham (partic’ler a soft knock), arter dark, at your aunt’s door, doesn’t you go nigh it. Let it be her—not you—that sees my fallen child!”

BUT, as that year wore on, Dora was not strong. I had hoped that lighter hands than mine would help to mould her character, and that a baby-smile upon her breast might change my child-wife to a woman. It was not to be. The spirit fluttered for a moment on the threshold of its little prison, and, unconscious of captivity, took wing.

BUT sometimes, when I took her up, and felt that she was lighter in my arms, a dead blank feeling came upon me, as if I were approaching to some frozen region, yet unseen, that numbed my life. I avoided the recognition of this feeling by any name, or by any communing with myself; until one night, when it was very strong upon me, and my aunt had left her with a parting cry of “Good-night, Little Blossom,” I sat down at my desk alone, and cried to think, oh what a fatal name it was, and how the blossom withered in its bloom upon the tree!

AGNES is downstairs, when I go into the parlor, and I give her the message. She disappears, leaving me alone with Jip.

His Chinese house is by the fire; and he lies within it, on his bed of flannel, querulously trying to sleep. The bright

moon is high and clear. As I look out on the night, my tears fall fast, and my undisciplined heart is chastened heavily—heavily.

I sit down by the fire, thinking with a blind remorse of all those secret feelings I have nourished since my marriage. I think of every little trifle between me and Dora, and feel the truth, that trifles make the sum of life. Ever rising from the sea of my remembrance, is the image of the dear child as I knew her first, graced by my young love, and by her own, with every fascination wherein such love is rich. Would it, indeed, have been better if we had loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it? Undisciplined heart, reply!

How the time wears, I know not; until I am recalled by my child-wife's old companion. More restless than he was, he crawls out of his house, and looks at me, and wanders to the door, and whines to go upstairs.

“Not to-night, Jip! Not to-night!”

He comes very slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face.

“Oh, Jip! It may be never again!”

He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and with a plaintive cry is dead.

“Oh, Agnes!—Look, look, here!”

—That face, so full of pity and of grief, that rain of tears, that awful, mute appeal to me, that solemn hand upraised towards Heaven!

“Agnes?”

It is over. Darkness comes before my eyes; and for a time all things are blotted out of my remembrance.

FROM *LITTLE DORRIT*.

THUS for ten days Little Dorrit bent over his pillow, laying her cheek against his. Sometimes she was so worn out that for a few minutes they would slumber together.

Then she would awake ; to recollect with fast-flowing, silent tears what it was that touched her face, and to see, stealing over the cherished face upon the pillow, a deeper shadow than the shadow of the Marshalsea Wall.

Quietly, quietly, all the lines of the plan of the great Castle melted, one after another. Quietly, quietly, the ruled and cross-ruled countenance on which they were traced became fair and blank. Quietly, quietly, the reflected marks of the prison-bars and of the zig-zag iron on the wall-top faded away. Quietly, quietly, the face subsided into a far younger likeness of her own than she had ever seen under the gray hair, and sank to rest.

At first her uncle was stark distracted. "O my brother. O William, William ! You to go before me ; you to go alone ; you to go, and I to remain ! You, so far superior, so distinguished, so noble ; I, a poor useless creature, fit for nothing, and whom no one would have missed !"

It did her, for the time, the good of having him to think of, and to succor. "Uncle, dear uncle, spare yourself, spare me !"

The old man was not deaf to the last words. When he did begin to restrain himself, it was that he might spare her. He had no care for himself ; but, with all the remaining power of the honest heart, stunned so long, and now awaking to be broken, he honored and blessed her.

"O God," he cried, before they left the room, with his wrinkled hands clasped over her. "Thou seest this daughter of my dear, dead brother ! All that I have looked upon, with my half-blind and sinful eyes, Thou hast discerned clearly, brightly. Not a hair of her head shall be harmed before Thee. Thou wilt uphold her here, to her last hour. And I know Thou wilt reward her hereafter !"

They remained in a dim room near, until it was almost midnight, quiet and sad together. At times his grief would seek relief, in a burst like that in which it had found its earliest expression ; but, besides that this little strength would

soon have been unequal to such strains, he never failed to recall her words, and to reproach himself and calm himself. The only utterance with which he indulged his sorrow was the frequent exclamation that his brother was gone, alone ; that they had been together in the outset of their lives, that they had fallen into misfortune together, that they had kept together through their many years of poverty, that they had remained together to that day ; and that his brother was gone, alone, alone !

They parted, heavy and sorrowful. She would not consent to leave him anywhere but in his own room, and she saw him lie down in his clothes upon his bed, and covered him with her own hands. Then she sank upon her own bed, and fell into a deep sleep : the sleep of exhaustion and rest, though not of complete release from a pervading consciousness of affliction. Sleep, good little Dorrit. Sleep through the night.

It was a moonlight night ; but the moon rose late, being long past the full. When it was high in the peaceful firmament, it shone through half-closed lattice blinds into the solemn room where the stumblings and wanderings of a life had so lately ended. Two quiet figures were within the room ; two figures, equally still and impassive, equally removed by an untraversable distance from the teeming earth and all that it contains, though soon to lie in it.

One figure reposed upon the bed. The other, kneeling on the floor, drooped over it ; the arms easily and peacefully resting on the coverlet ; the face bowed down, so that the lips touched the hand over which, with its last breath, it had bent. The two brothers were before their Father ; far beyond the twilight judgments of this world ; high above its mists and obscurities.

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

SO cold, although the air was warm; so dull, although the sky was bright: that he rose up shivering, from his seat, and hastily resumed his walk. He checked himself as hastily: undecided whether to pursue the footpath which was lonely and retired, or to go back by the road.

He took the footpath.

The glory of the departing sun was on his face. The music of the birds was in his ear. Sweet wild-flowers bloomed about him. Thatched roofs of poor men's homes were in the distance; and an old gray spire, surmounted by a Cross, rose up between him and the coming night.

He had never read the lesson which these things conveyed; he had ever mocked and turned away from it; but, before going down into a hollow place, he looked round, once, upon the evening prospect, sorrowfully. Then he went down, down, down into the dell.

It brought him to the wood; a close, thick, shadowy wood, through which the path went winding on, dwindling away into a slender sheep-track. He paused before entering; for the stillness of this spot almost daunted him.

The last rays of the sun were shining in, aslant, making a path of golden light along the stems and branches in its range, which, even as he looked, began to die away, yielding gently to the twilight that came creeping on. It was so very quiet that the soft and stealthy moss about the trunks of some old trees, seemed to have grown out of the silence, and to be its proper offspring. Those other trees which were subdued by blasts of wind in winter-time, had not quite tumbled down, but being caught by others, lay all bare and scathed across their leafy arms, as if unwilling to disturb the general repose by the crash of their fall. Vistas of silence opened everywhere, into the heart and innermost recesses of the wood; beginning with the likeness of an aisle, a cloister, or a ruin open to the sky;

then tangling off into a deep green rustling mystery, through which gnarled trunks, and twisted boughs, and ivy-covered stems, and trembling leaves, and bark-stripped bodies of old trees stretched out at length, were faintly seen in beautiful confusion.

As the sunlight died away, and evening fell upon the wood, he entered it. Moving, here and there, a bramble or a drooping bough which stretched across his path, he slowly disappeared. At intervals a narrow opening showed him passing on, or the sharp cracking of some tender branch denoted where he went: then, he was seen or heard no more.

Never more beheld by mortal eye or heard by mortal ear: one man excepted.

DEATH OF LITTLE NELL.

THE dull, red glow of a wood-fire—for no lamp or candle burnt within the room—showed him a figure seated on the hearth with its back towards him, bending over the fitful light. The attitude was that of one who sought the heat. It was, and yet was not. The stooping pressure and the cowering form were there, but no hands were stretched out to meet the grateful warmth, no shrug or shiver compared its luxury with the piercing cold outside. With limbs huddled together, head bowed down, arms crossed upon the breast, and fingers tightly clenched, it rocked to and fro upon its seat without a moment's pause, accompanying the action with the mournful sound he had heard.

The heavy door had closed behind him on his entrance with a crash that made him start. The figure neither spoke, nor turned to look, nor gave in any other way the faintest sign of having heard the noise. The form was that of an old man, his white head akin in color to the mouldering embers upon which he gazed. He, and the failing light, and dying fire, the time-

worn room, the solitude, the wasted life and gloom, were all in fellowship. Ashes, and dust, and ruin !

Kit tried to speak, and did pronounce some words, though what they were he scarcely knew. Still the same terrible low cry went on—still the same rocking in the chair—the same stricken figure was there, unchanged and heedless of his presence.

He had his hand upon the latch, when something in the form—distinctly seen as one log broke and fell, and as it fell, blazed up—arrested it. He returned to where he had stood before—advanced a pace—another—another still. Another, and he saw the face. Yes ! Changed as it was, he knew it well.

“Master !” he cried, stooping on one knee, and catching at his hand. “Dear master. Speak to me !”

The old man turned slowly towards him, and muttered in a hollow voice :

“This is another !—How many of these spirits there have been to-night !”

“No spirit, master. No one but your old servant. You know me now, I am sure. Miss Nell—where is she—where is she ?”

“They all say that !” cried the old man. “They all ask the same question. A spirit !”

“Where is she ?” demanded Kit. “Oh tell me but that—but that, dear master !”

“She is asleep—yonder—in there.”

“Thank God !”

“Aye ! Thank God !” returned the old man. “I have prayed to Him many and many and many a livelong night, when she has been asleep, He knows. Hark ! Did she call ?”

“I heard no voice.”

“You did. You hear her now. Do you tell me that you don’t hear *that* ?”

He started up and listened again.

“Nor that ?” he cried, with a triumphant smile. “Can anybody know that voice so well as I ? Hush ! hush !”

Motioning him to be silent, he stole away into another chamber. After a short absence (during which he could be heard to speak in a softened, soothing tone) he returned, bearing in his hand a lamp.

"She is still asleep," he whispered. "You were right. She did not call—unless she did so in her slumber. She has called to me in her sleep before now, sir ; as I have sat by watching, I have seen her lips move, and have known, though no sound came from them, that she spoke of me. I feared the light might dazzle her eyes and wake her, so I brought it here."

He spoke rather to himself than to the visitor ; but when he had put the lamp upon the table, he took it up, as if impelled by some momentary recollection or curiosity, and held it near his face. Then, as if forgetting his motive in the very action, he turned away and put it down again.

"She is sleeping soundly," he said ; "but no wonder. Angel hands have strewn the ground deep with snow, that the lightest footstep may be lighter yet ; and the very birds are dead, that they may not wake her. She used to feed them, sir. Though never so cold and hungry, the timid things would fly from us. They never flew from her !"

Again he stopped to listen, and scarcely drawing breath, listened for a long, long time. That fancy past, he opened an old chest, took out some clothes as fondly as if they had been living things, and began to smooth and brush them with his hand.

"Why dost thou lie so idle there, dear Nell," he murmured, "when there are bright red berries out-of-doors waiting for thee to pluck them ? Why dost thou lie so idle there, when thy little friends come creeping to the door, crying 'where is Nell—sweet Nell ?'—and sob and weep because they do not see thee ? She was always gentle with children. The wildest would do her bidding—she had a tender way with them ; indeed she had !"

Kit had no power to speak. His eyes were filled with tears.

"Her little homely dress—her favorite !" cried the old man,

pressing it to his breast, and patting it with his shrivelled hand. "She will miss it when she wakes. They have hid it here in sport, but she shall have it—she shall have it. I would not vex my darling for the wide world's riches. See here—these shoes—how worn they are—she kept them to remind her of our last long journey. You see where the little feet went bare upon the ground. They told me afterwards that the stones had cut and bruised them. *She* never told me that. No, no, God bless her! and I have remembered since, she walked behind me, sir, that I might not see how lame she was—but yet she had my hand in hers, and seemed to lead me still."

He pressed them to his lips, and having carefully put them back again, went on communing with himself—looking wistfully from time to time towards the chamber he had lately visited.

"She was not wont to be a lie-abed; but she was well then. We must have patience. When she is well again, she will rise early, as she used to do, and ramble abroad in the healthy morning-time. I often tried to track the way she had gone, but her small footstep left no print upon the dewy ground to guide me. Who is that? Shut the door. Quick!—Have we not enough to do to drive away that marble cold, and keep her warm?"

The door was indeed opened, for the entrance of Mr. Garland and his friend, accompanied by two other persons. These were the schoolmaster and the bachelor. The former held a light in his hand. He had, it seemed, but gone to his own cottage to replenish the exhausted lamp, at the moment when Kit came up and found the old man alone.

He softened again at sight of these two friends, and, laying aside the angry manner—if to anything so feeble and so sad the term can be applied—in which he had spoken when the door opened, resumed his former seat, and subsided, by little and little, into the old action, and the old, dull, wandering sound.

Of the strangers he took no heed whatever. He had seen them, but appeared quite incapable of interest or curiosity.

The younger brother stood apart. The bachelor drew a chair towards the old man, and sat down close behind him. After a long silence, he ventured to speak.

"Another night, and not in bed!" he said softly; "I hoped you would be more mindful of your promise to me. Why do you not take some rest?"

"Sleep has left me," returned the old man. "It is all with her!"

"It would pain her very much to know that you were watching thus," said the bachelor. "You would not give her pain?"

"I am not so sure of that, if it would only rouse her. She has slept so very long. And yet I am rash to say so. It is a good and happy sleep—eh?"

"Indeed it is," returned the bachelor. "Indeed, indeed, it is!"

"That's well!—and the waking"—faltered the old man.

"Happy too. Happier than tongue can tell, or heart of man conceive."

They watched him as he rose and stole on tiptoe to the other chamber where the lamp had been replaced. They listened as he spoke again within its silent walls. They looked into the faces of each other, and no man's cheek was free from tears. He came back, whispering that she was still asleep, but that he thought she had moved. It was her hand, he said—a little—a very, very little—but he was pretty sure she had moved it—perhaps in seeking his. He had known her do that, before now, though in the deepest sleep the while. And when he had said this, he dropped into his chair again, and clasping his hands above his head, uttered a cry never to be forgotten.

The poor schoolmaster motioned to the bachelor that he would come on the other side, and speak to him. They gently unlocked his fingers, which he had twisted in his gray hair, and pressed them in their own.

"He will hear me," said the schoolmaster, "I am sure. He will hear either me or you, if we beseech him. She would at all times."

“I will hear any voice she liked to hear,” cried the old man. “I love all she loved!”

“I know you do,” returned the schoolmaster. “I am certain of it. Think of her; think of all the sorrows and afflictions you have shared together; of all the trials, and all the peaceful pleasures, you have jointly known.”

“I do. I do. I think of nothing else.”

“I would have you think of nothing else to-night—of nothing but those things which will soften your heart, dear friend, and open it to old affections and old times. It is so that she would speak to you herself, and in her name it is that I speak now.”

“You do well to speak softly,” said the old man. “We will not wake her. I should be glad to see her eyes again, and to see her smile. There is a smile upon her young face now, but it is fixed and changeless. I would have it come and go. That shall be in Heaven’s good time. We will not wake her.”

“Let us not talk of her in her sleep, but as she used to be when you were journeying together, far away—as she was at home, in the old house from which you fled together—as she was, in the old cheerful time,” said the schoolmaster.

“She was always cheerful—very cheerful,” cried the old man, looking steadfastly at him. “There was ever something mild and quiet about her, I remember, from the first; but she was of a happy nature.”

“We have heard you say,” pursued the schoolmaster, “that in this and in all goodness, she was like her mother. You can think of and remember her?”

He maintained his steadfast look, but gave no answer.

“Or even one before her,” said the bachelor. “It is many years ago, and affliction makes the time longer, but you have not forgotten her whose death contributed to make this child so dear to you, even before you knew her worth, or could read her heart? Say that you could carry back your thoughts to very distant days—to the time of your early life—when, unlike this fair flower, you did not pass your youth alone. Say that you could remember, long ago, another child who loved you dear-

ly, you being but a child yourself. Say that you had a brother, long forgotten, long unseen, long separated from you, who now, at last, in your utmost need, came back to comfort and console you—”

“To be to you what you were once to him,” cried the younger, falling on his knee before him; “to repay your old affection, brother dear, by constant care, solicitude, and love; to be, at your right hand, what he has never ceased to be when oceans rolled between us; to call to witness his unchanging truth and mindfulness of by-gone days, whole years of desolation. Give me but one word of recognition, brother—and never—no never, in the brightest moment of our youngest days, when, poor silly boys, we thought to pass our lives together—have we been half as dear and precious to each other as we shall be from this time hence!”

The old man looked from face to face, and his lips moved; but no sound came from them in reply.

“If we were knit together then,” pursued the younger brother, “what will be the bond between us now! Our love and fellowship began in childhood, when life was all before us, and will be resumed when we have proved it, and are but children at the last. As many restless spirits, who have hunted fortune, fame, or pleasure through the world, retire in their decline to where they first drew breath, vainly seeking to be children once again before they die, so we, less fortunate than they in early life, but happier in its closing scenes, will set up our rest again among our boyish haunts, and going home with no hope realized that had its growth in manhood—carrying back nothing that we brought away, but our old yearnings to each other—saving no fragment from the wreck of life, but that which first endeared it—may be, indeed, but children, as at first. And even,” he added, in an altered voice, “even if what I dread to name has come to pass—even if that be so, or is to be (which Heaven forbid and spare us!)—still, dear brother, we are not apart, and have that comfort in our great affliction.”

By little and little, the old man had drawn back towards the

inner chamber, while these words were spoken. He pointed there, as he replied, with trembling lips.

“ You plot among you to wean my heart from her. You never will do that—never while I have life. I have no relative or friend but her—I never had—I never will have. She is all in all to me. It is too late to part us now.”

Waving them off with his hand, and calling softly to her as he went, he stole into the room. They who were left behind drew close together, and after a few whispered words—not unbroken by emotion, or easily uttered—followed him. They moved so gently that their footsteps made no noise ; but there were sobs from among the group, and sounds of grief and mourning.

For she was dead. There, upon her little bed, she lay at rest. The solemn stillness was no marvel now.

She was dead. No sleep so beautiful and calm, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God, and waiting for the breath of life ; not one who had lived and suffered death.

Her couch was dressed with here and there some winter berries and green leaves gathered in a spot she had been used to favor. “ When I die, put near me something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always.” Those were her words.

She was dead. Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell was dead. Her little bird—a poor slight thing the pressure of a finger would have crushed—was stirring nimbly in its cage ; and the strong heart of its child-mistress was mute and motionless forever.

Where were the traces of her early cares, her sufferings, and fatigues ? All gone. Sorrow was dead indeed in her, but peace and perfect happiness were born, imaged in her tranquil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay there, unaltered in this change. Yes. The old fireside had smiled upon that same sweet face ; it had passed, like a dream, through haunts of misery and care ;

at the door of the poor schoolmaster on the summer evening, before the furnace fire upon the cold wet night, at the still bedside of the dying boy, there had been the same mild, lovely look. So shall we know the angels in their majesty after death.

The old man held one languid arm in his, and had the small hand tight folded to his breast for warmth. It was the hand she had stretched out to him with her last smile—the hand that led him on through all their wanderings. Ever and anon he pressed it to his lips; then hugged it to his breast again, murmuring that it was warmer now; and, as he said it, he looked, in agony, to those who stood around, as if imploring them to help her.

She was dead, and past all help, or need of it. The ancient rooms she had seemed to fill with life, even while her own was waning fast—the garden she had tended—the eyes she had gladdened—the noiseless haunts of many a thoughtful hour—the paths she had trodden as it were but yesterday—could know her nevermore.

“It is not,” said the old schoolmaster, as he bent down to kiss her on the cheek, and gave his tears free vent, “it is not on earth that Heaven’s justice ends. Think what earth is, compared with the World to which her young spirit has winged its early flight; and say, if one deliberate wish expressed in solemn terms above this bed could call her back to life, which of us would utter it!”

PROMISCUOUS.



CHAPTER VIII.

FROM PICKWICK PAPERS.

TO any one acquainted with these points of the domestic economy of the establishment, and conversant with the admirable regulation of Mr. Pickwick's mind, his appearance and behavior on the morning previous to that which had been fixed upon for the journey to Eatanswill, would have been most mysterious and unaccountable. He paced the room to and fro with hurried steps, popped his head out of the window at intervals of about three minutes each, constantly referred to his watch, and exhibited many other manifestations of impatience very unusual with him. It was evident that something of great importance was in contemplation, but what that something was, not even Mrs. Bardell herself had been enabled to discover.

"Mrs. Bardell," said Mr. Pickwick, at last, as that amiable female approached the termination of a prolonged dusting of the apartment—

"Sir," said Mrs. Bardell.

"Your little boy is a very long time gone."

"Why it's a good long way to the Borough, sir," remonstrated Mrs. Bardell.

"Ah," said Mr. Pickwick, "very true ; so it is."

Mr. Pickwick relapsed into silence, and Mrs. Bardell resumed her dusting.

"Mrs. Bardell," said Mr. Pickwick, at the expiration of a few minutes.

"Sir," said Mrs. Bardell again.

"Do you think it much greater expense to keep two people, than to keep one?"

"La, Mr. Pickwick," said Mrs. Bardell, coloring up to the very border of her cap, as she fancied she observed a species of matrimonial twinkle in the eyes of her lodger; "La, Mr. Pickwick, what a question!"

"Well, but *do* you?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"That depends—" said Mrs. Bardell, approaching the duster very near to Mr. Pickwick's elbow, which was planted on the table—"that depends a good deal upon the person, you know, Mr. Pickwick; and whether it's a saving and careful person, sir."

"That's very true," said Mr. Pickwick, "but the person I have in my eye [here he looked very hard at Mrs. Bardell] I think possesses these qualities; and has, moreover, a considerable knowledge of the world, and a great deal of sharpness, Mrs. Bardell; which may be of material use to me."

"La, Mr. Pickwick," said Mrs. Bardell, the crimson rising to her cap-border again.

"I do," said Mr. Pickwick, growing energetic, as was his wont in speaking of a subject which interested him, "I do, indeed; and to tell you the truth, Mrs. Bardell, I have made up my mind."

"Dear me, sir," exclaimed Mrs. Bardell.

"You'll think it very strange now," said the amiable Mr. Pickwick, with a good-humored glance at his companion, "that I never consulted you about this matter, and never even mentioned it, till I sent your little boy out this morning—eh?"

Mrs. Bardell could only reply by a look. She had long worshipped Mr. Pickwick at a distance, but here she was, all at once, raised to a pinnacle to which her wildest and most extravagant hopes had never dared to aspire. Mr. Pickwick was going to propose—a deliberate plan, too—sent her little boy to the Borough, to get him out of the way—how thoughtful—how considerate!

"Well," said Mr. Pickwick, "what do you think?"

"Oh, Mr. Pickwick," said Mrs. Bardell, trembling with agitation, "you're very kind, sir."

"It'll save you a good deal of trouble, won't it?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Oh, I never thought anything of the trouble, sir," replied Mrs. Bardell; "and, of course I should take more trouble to please you then, than ever; but it is so kind of you, Mr. Pickwick, to have so much consideration for my loneliness."

"Ah, to be sure," said Mr. Pickwick; "I never thought of that. When I am in town you'll always have somebody to sit with you. To be sure, so you will."

"I'm sure I ought to be a very happy woman," said Mrs. Bardell.

"And your little boy," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Bless his heart!" interposed Mrs. Bardell, with a maternal sob.

"He, too, will have a companion," resumed Mr. Pickwick, "a lively one, who'll teach him, I'll be bound, more tricks in a week than he would ever learn in a year." And Mr. Pickwick smiled placidly.

"Oh you dear—" said Mrs. Bardell.

Mr. Pickwick started.

"Oh you kind, good, playful dear," said Mrs. Bardell: and without more ado she rose from her chair, and flung her arms round Mr. Pickwick's neck, with a cataract of tears and a chorus of sobs.

"Bless my soul," cried the astonished Mr. Pickwick; "Mrs. Bardell, my good woman—dear me, what a situation—pray consider.—Mrs. Bardell, don't—if anybody should come—"

"Oh, let them come," exclaimed Mrs. Bardell, frantically; "I'll never leave you—dear, kind, good soul;" and, with these words, Mrs. Bardell clung the tighter.

"Mercy upon me," said Mr. Pickwick, struggling violently, "I hear somebody coming up the stairs. Don't, don't, there's a good creature, don't." But entreaty and remonstrance were

alike unavailing ; for Mrs. Bardell had fainted in Mr. Pickwick's arms ; and, before he could gain time to deposit her on a chair, Master Bardell entered the room, ushering in Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Snodgrass.

Mr. Pickwick was struck motionless and speechless. He stood with his lovely burden in his arms, gazing vacantly on the countenances of his friends, without the slightest attempt at recognition or explanation. They in their turn, stared at him, and Master Bardell in his turn stared at everybody.

The astonishment of the Pickwickians was so absorbing, and the perplexity of Mr. Pickwick was so extreme, that they might have remained in exactly the same relative situations until the suspended animation of the lady was restored, had it not been for a most beautiful and touching expression of filial affection on the part of her youthful son. Clad in a tight suit of corduroy, spangled with brass buttons of a very considerable size, he at first stood at the door astounded and uncertain ; but by degrees the impression that his mother must have suffered some personal damage, pervaded his partially developed mind, and considering Mr. Pickwick as the aggressor, he set up an appalling and semi-earthly kind of howling, and butting forward with his head, commenced assailing that immortal gentleman about the back and legs, with such blows and pinches as the strength of his arm and the violence of his excitement allowed.

"Take this villain away," said the agonized Mr. Pickwick, "he's mad."

"What *is* the matter ?" said the three tongue-tied Pickwickians.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Pickwick, pettishly. "Take away the boy" (here Mr. Winkle carried the interesting boy, screaming and struggling, to the farther end of the apartment).

"Now, help me, lead this woman downstairs."

"Oh, I am better now," said Mrs. Bardell, faintly.

"Let me lead you downstairs," said the ever gallant Mr. Tupman.

"Thank you, sir—thank you," exclaimed Mrs. Bardell, hysterically. And downstairs she was led accordingly, accompanied by her affectionate son.

"I cannot conceive—" said Mr. Pickwick, when his friend returned—"I cannot conceive what has been the matter with that woman. I had merely announced to her my intention of keeping a man-servant, when she fell into the extraordinary paroxysm in which you found her. Very extraordinary thing."

IT was evening. Isabella and Emily had strolled out with Mr. Trundle; the deaf old lady had fallen asleep in her chair; the snoring of the fat boy penetrated in a low and monotonous sound from the distant kitchen; the buxom servants were lounging at the side-door, enjoying the pleasantness of the hour, and the delights of a flirtation, on first principles, with certain unwieldy animals attached to the farm; and there sat the interesting pair, uncared for by all, caring for none, and dreaming only of themselves—there they sat, in short, like a pair of carefully folded kid-gloves—bound up in each other.

"I have forgotten my flowers," said the spinster aunt.

"Water them now," said Mr. Tupman, in accents of persuasion.

"You will take cold in the evening air," urged the spinster aunt, affectionately.

"No, no," said Mr. Tupman rising; "it will do me good. Let me accompany you."

The lady paused to adjust the sling in which the left arm of the youth was placed, and taking his right arm led him to the garden.

There was a bower at the farther end, with honeysuckle, jessamine, and creeping plants—one of those sweet retreats which humane men erect for the accommodation of spiders.

The spinster aunt took up a large watering-pot which lay in one corner, and was about to leave the arbor. Mr. Tupman detained her, and drew her to a seat beside him.

“Miss Wardle!” said he.

The spinster aunt trembled, till some pebbles, which had accidentally found their way into the large watering-pot, shook like an infant’s rattle.

“Miss Wardle,” said Mr. Tupman, “you are an angel.”

“Mr. Tupman!” exclaimed Rachael, blushing as red as the watering-pot itself.

“Nay,” said the eloquent Pickwickian—“I know it but too well.”

“All women are angels, they say,” murmured the lady, playfully.

“Then what can *you* be; or, to what, without presumption, can I compare you?” replied Mr. Tupman. “Where was the woman ever seen who resembled you? Where else could I hope to find so rare a combination of excellence and beauty? Where else could I seek to—Oh!” Here Mr. Tupman paused, and pressed the hand which clasped the handle of the happy watering-pot.

The lady turned aside her head. “Men are such deceivers,” she softly whispered.

“They are, they are,” ejaculated Mr. Tupman; “but not all men. There lives at least one being who can never change—one being who would be content to devote his whole existence to your happiness—who lives but in your eyes—who breathes but in your smiles—who bears the heavy burden of life itself only for you.”

“Could such an individual be found,” said the lady—

“But he *can* be found,” said the ardent Mr. Tupman, interposing. “He *is* found. He is here, Miss Wardle.” And ere the lady was aware of his intention, Mr. Tupman had sunk upon his knees at her feet.

“Mr. Tupman, rise,” said Rachael.

“Never!” was the valorous reply. “Oh, Rachael!”—He seized her passive hand, and the watering-pot fell to the ground, as he pressed it to his lips—“Oh, Rachael! say you love me.”

“Mr. Tupman,” said the spinster aunt, with averted head—
“I can hardly speak the words, but—but—you are not wholly indifferent to me.”

Mr. Tupman no sooner heard this avowal, than he proceeded to do what his enthusiastic emotions prompted, and what, for aught we know (for we are but little acquainted with such matters), people so circumstanced always do. He jumped up, and throwing his arm round the neck of the spinster aunt, imprinted upon her lips numerous kisses, which, after a due show of struggling and resistance, she received so passively, that there is no telling how many more Mr. Tupman might have bestowed, if the lady had not given a very unaffected start, and exclaimed in an affrighted tone—

“Mr. Tupman, we are observed!—we are discovered!”

Mr. Tupman looked round. There was the fat boy, perfectly motionless, with his large circular eyes staring into the arbor, but without the slightest expression on his face that the most expert physiognomist could have referred to astonishment, curiosity, or any other known passion that agitates the human breast. Mr. Tupman gazed on the fat boy, and the fat boy stared at him; and the longer Mr. Tupman observed the utter vacancy of the fat boy’s countenance, the more convinced he became that he either did not know, or did not understand, anything that had been going forward. Under this impression, he said with great firmness—

“What do you want here, sir?”

“Supper’s ready, sir,” was the prompt reply.

“**W**E want to know,” said the little man, solemnly; “and we ask the question of you, in order that we may not awaken apprehensions inside—we want to know who you’ve got in this house, at present?”

“Who there is in the house!” said Sam, in whose mind the inmates were always represented by that particular article of their costume which came under his immediate superintend-

ence. "There's a wooden leg in number six ; there's a pair of Hessians in thirteen ; there's two pair of halves in the commercial ; there's these here painted tops in the snugger inside the bar ; and five more tops in the coffee-room."

"Nothing more ?" said the little man.

"Stop a bit," replied Sam, suddenly recollecting himself. "Yes ; there's a pair of Wellingtons a good deal worn and a pair o' lady's shoes, in number five."

"What sort of shoes ?" hastily inquired Wardle, who, together with Mr. Pickwick, had been lost in bewilderment at the singular catalogue of visitors.

"Country make," replied Sam.

"Any maker's name ?"

"Brown."

"Where of ?"

"Muggleton."

"It *is* them," exclaimed Wardle. "By heavens, we've found them."

"Hush !" said Sam. "The Wellingtons has gone to Doctors' Commons."

"No," said the little man.

"Yes, for a license."

"We're in time," exclaimed Wardle. "Show us the room ; not a moment is to be lost."

"Pray, my dear sir—pray," said the little man ; "caution, caution." He drew from his pocket a red-silk purse, and looked very hard at Sam as he drew out a sovereign.

Sam grinned expressively.

"Show us into the room at once, without announcing us," said the little man, "and it's yours."

"**I** SHOULD feel very much obliged to you for any advice, sir," said Mr. Magnus, taking another look at the clock, the hand of which was verging on the five minutes past.

"Well, sir," said Mr. Pickwick, with the profound solem-

nity with which that great man could, when he pleased, render his remarks so deeply impressive: "I should commence, sir, with a tribute to the lady's beauty and excellent qualities; from them, sir, I should diverge to my own unworthiness."

"Very good," said Mr. Magnus.

"Unworthiness for *her* only, mind, sir," resumed Mr. Pickwick; "for to show that I was not wholly unworthy, sir, I should take a brief review of my past life, and present condition. I should argue, by analogy, that to anybody else, I must be a very desirable object. I should then expatiate on the warmth of my love, and the depth of my devotion. Perhaps I might then be tempted to seize her hand."

"Yes, I see," said Mr. Magnus; "that would be a very great point."

"I should then, sir," continued Mr. Pickwick, growing warmer as the subject presented itself in more glowing colors before him: "I should, then, sir, come to the plain and simple question, 'Will you have me?' I think I am justified in assuming that upon this, she would turn away her head."

"You think that may be taken for granted?" said Mr. Magnus; "because if she did not do that at the right place, it would be embarrassing."

"I think she would," said Mr. Pickwick. "Upon this, sir, I should squeeze her hand, and I think—I *think*, Mr. Magnus—that after I had done that, supposing there was no refusal, I should gently draw away the handkerchief, which my slight knowledge of human nature leads me to suppose the lady would be applying to her eyes at the moment, and steal a respectful kiss. I think I should kiss her, Mr. Magnus; and at this particular point, I am decidedly of opinion that if the lady were going to take me at all, she would murmur into my ears a bashful acceptance."

Mr. Magnus started; gazed on Mr. Pickwick's intelligent face, for a short time in silence; and then (the dial pointing to the ten minutes past) shook him warmly by the hand, and rushed desperately from the room.

Mr. Pickwick had taken a few strides to and fro ; and the small hand of the clock following the latter part of his example, had arrived at the figure which indicates the half hour, when the door suddenly opened. He turned round to meet Mr. Peter Magnus, and encountered in his stead the joyous face of Mr. Tupman, the serene countenance of Mr. Winkle, and the intellectual lineaments of Mr. Snodgrass. As Mr. Pickwick greeted them, Mr. Peter Magnus tripped into the room.

“My friends, the gentleman I was speaking of—Mr. Magnus,” said Mr. Pickwick.

“Your servant, gentlemen,” said Mr. Magnus, evidently in a high state of excitement ; “Mr. Pickwick, allow me to speak to you one moment, sir.”

As he said this, Mr. Magnus harnessed his forefinger to Mr. Pickwick’s button-hole, and, drawing him to a window recess, said :

“Congratulate me, Mr. Pickwick ; I followed your advice to the very letter.”

“And it was all correct, was it ?” inquired Mr. Pickwick.

“It was, sir. Could not possibly have been better,” replied Mr. Magnus. “Mr. Pickwick, she is mine.”

“I congratulate you with all my heart,” replied Mr. Pickwick, warmly shaking his new friend by the hand.

“You must see her, sir,” said Mr. Magnus ; “this way, if you please. Excuse us for one instant, gentlemen.” Hurrying on in this way, Mr. Peter Magnus drew Mr. Pickwick from the room. He paused at the next door in the passage, and tapped gently thereat.

“Come in,” said a female voice. And in they went.

“Miss Witherfield,” said Mr. Magnus, “allow me to introduce my very particular friend, Mr. Pickwick. Mr. Pickwick, I beg to make you known to Miss Witherfield.”

The lady was at the upper end of the room. As Mr. Pickwick bowed, he took his spectacles from his waistcoat pocket, and put them on ; a process which he had no sooner gone through, than, uttering an exclamation of surprise, Mr. Pick-

wick retreated several paces, and the lady, with a half-suppressed scream, hid her face in her hands, and dropped into a chair; whereupon Mr. Peter Magnus was stricken motionless on the spot, and gazed from one to the other, with a countenance expressive of the extremities of horror and surprise.

This certainly was, to all appearance, very unaccountable behavior; but the fact is, that Mr. Pickwick no sooner put on his spectacles, than he at once recognized in the future Mrs. Magnus the lady into whose room he had so unwarrantably intruded on the previous night; and the spectacles had no sooner crossed Mr. Pickwick's nose than the lady at once identified the countenance which she had seen surrounded by all the horrors of a nightcap. So the lady screamed, and Mr. Pickwick started.

“**N**OW,” said Wardle, after a substantial lunch, with the agreeable items of strong-beer and cherry-brandy, had been done ample justice to, “what say you to an hour on the ice? we shall have plenty of time.”

“Capital!” said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

“Prime!” ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

“You skate, of course, Winkle?” said Wardle.

“Ye-yes; oh, yes,” replied Mr. Winkle. “I—I—am *rather* out of practice.”

“Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle,” said Arabella, “I like to see it so much.”

“Oh, it is *so* graceful,” said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was “swan-like.”

“I should be very happy, I’m sure,” said Mr. Winkle, reddening; “but I have no skates.”

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pair, and the fat boy announced that there were half a dozen more downstairs; whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice ; and the fat boy and Mr. Weller, having shovelled and swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the night, Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous, and described circles with his left leg, and cut figures of eight, and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and the ladies ; which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm, when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions, which they called a reel.

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on, with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

“Now, then, sir,” said Sam, in an encouraging tone ; “off with you, and show ’em how to do it.”

“Stop, Sam, stop !” said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam’s arms with the grasp of a drowning man. “How slippery it is, Sam !”

“Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir,” replied Mr. Weller. “Hold up, sir !”

This last observation of Mr. Weller’s bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

“These—these—are very awkward skates ; ain’t they, Sam ?” inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

“I’m afeerd there’s a orkard gen’l’m’n in ’em, sir,” replied Sam.

“Now, Winkle,” cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that

there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile, "I'm coming."

"Just a-goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavoring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily. "You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're very good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle stooping forward, with his body half doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller in a very singular and un-swanlike manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank.

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

"Here. I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor a-callin'? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort, Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonized Pickwickian, and, in so doing, administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash

they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind, in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile ; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

“Are you hurt?” inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, with great anxiety.

“Not much,” said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

“I wish you’d let me bleed you,” said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

“No, thank you,” replied Mr. Winkle hurriedly.

“I really think you had better,” said Allen.

“Thank you,” replied Mr. Winkle ; “I’d rather not.”

“What do *you* think, Mr. Pickwick?” inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller, and said in a stern voice, “Take his skates off.”

“No ; but really I had scarcely begun,” remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

“Take his skates off,” repeated Mr. Pickwick firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

“Lift him up,” said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders ; and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered in a low but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words :

“You’re a humbug, sir.”

“A what?” said Mr. Winkle, starting.

“A humbug, sir. I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir.”

With these words, Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel, and rejoined his friends.

While Mr. Pickwick was delivering himself of the sentiment just recorded, Mr. Weller and the fat boy, having by their joint

endeavors cut out a slide, were exercising themselves there-upon, in a very masterly and brilliant manner. Sam Weller, in particular, was displaying that beautiful feat of fancy-sliding which is currently denominated "knocking at the cobbler's door," and which is achieved by skimming over the ice on one foot, and occasionally giving a postman's knock upon it with the other. It was a good long slide, and there was something in the motion which Mr. Pickwick, who was very cold with standing still, could not help envying.

"It looks a nice warm exercise that, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle, when that gentleman was thoroughly out of breath, by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses, and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

"Ah, it does indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters, when I was a boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh, do please, Mr. Pickwick," cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

"Pooh! pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterized all his proceedings. "Here; I'll keep you company; come along!" And away went the good-tempered old fellow down the slide, with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller, and beat the fat boy all to nothing.

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves and put them in his hat: took two or three short runs, balked himself as often, and at last took another run, and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard and a quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

"Keep the pot a-bilin', sir!" said Sam; and down went Wardle again, and then Mr. Pickwick, and then Sam, and then Mr. Winkle, and then Mr. Bob Sawyer, and then the fat boy,

and then Mr. Snodgrass, following closely upon each other's heels, and running after each other with as much eagerness as if all their future prospects in life depended on their expedition.

It was the most intensely interesting thing, to observe the manner in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony ; to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind, gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up ; to see him gradually expend the painful force he had put on at first, and turn slowly round on the slide, with his face towards the point from which he had started ; to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance, and the eagerness with which he turned round when he had done so, and ran after his predecessor ; his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow, and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles. And when he was knocked down (which happened, upon the average, every third round), it was the most invigorating sight that can possibly be imagined, to behold him gather up his hat, gloves, and handkerchief, with a glowing countenance, and resume his station in the rank, with an ardor and enthusiasm that nothing could abate.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp, smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush towards the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared ; the water bubbled up over it ; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves, and handkerchief were floating on the surface ; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance ; the males turned pale, and the females fainted ; Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand, and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down, with frenzied eagerness ; while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance, and at the same time conveying to any person who might be within hearing, the clearest possible

notion of the catastrophe, ran off across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this moment, when old Wardle and Sam Weller were approaching the hole with cautious steps, and Mr. Benjamin Allen was holding a hurried consultation with Mr. Bob Sawyer, on the advisability of bleeding the company generally, as an improving little bit of professional practice—it was at this very moment, that a face, head, and shoulders, emerged from beneath the water, and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do; let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The adjuration was rather unnecessary; the probability being, that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody's else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face, and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

The clay upon so much of Mr. Pickwick's coat as was yet visible, bore testimony to the accuracy of this statement; and as the fears of the spectators were still further relieved by the fat boy's suddenly recollecting that the water was nowhere more than five feet deep, prodigies of valor were performed to get him out. After a vast quantity of splashing, and cracking, and struggling, Mr. Pickwick was at length fairly extricated from his unpleasant position, and once more stood on dry land.

"Oh, he'll catch his death of cold," said Emily.

"Dear old thing!" said Arabella. "Let me wrap this shawl round you, Mr. Pickwick."

"Ah, that's the best thing you can do," said Wardle; "and when you've got it on, run home as fast as your legs can carry you, and jump into bed directly."

A dozen shawls were offered on the instant. Three or four of the thickest having been selected, Mr. Pickwick was wrapped up, and started off, under the guidance of Mr. Weller: presenting the singular phenomenon of an elderly gentleman, dripping wet, and without a hat, with his arms bound down to his sides, skimming over the ground, without any clearly defined purpose, at the rate of six good English miles an hour.

But Mr. Pickwick cared not for appearances in such an extreme case, and urged on by Sam Weller, he kept at the very top of his speed until he reached the door of Manor Farm, where Mr. Tupman had arrived some five minutes before, and had frightened the old lady into palpitations of the heart by impressing her with the unalterable conviction that the kitchen chimney was on fire—a calamity which always presented itself in glowing colors to the old lady's mind, when anybody about her evinced the smallest agitation.

Mr. Pickwick paused not an instant until he was snug in bed. Sam Weller lighted a blazing fire in the room, and took up his dinner; a bowl of punch was carried up afterwards, and a grand carouse held in honor of his safety. Old Wardle would not hear of his rising, so they made the bed the chair, and Mr. Pickwick presided. A second and a third bowl were ordered in, and when Mr. Pickwick awoke next morning, there was not a symptom of rheumatism about him; which proves, as Mr. Bob Sawyer very justly observed, that there is nothing like hot punch in such cases; and that if ever hot punch did fail to act as a preventive, it was merely because the patient fell into the vulgar error of not taking enough of it.

FROM NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

“**E** DUCATION.—At Mr. Wackford Squeers's Academy, Dotheboys' Hall, at the delightful village of Dotheboys, near Greta Bridge in Yorkshire, Youth are boarded,

clothed, booked, furnished with pocket-money, provided with all necessaries, instructed in all languages living and dead, mathematics, orthography, geometry, astronomy, trigonometry, the use of the globes, algebra, single-stick (if required), writing, arithmetic, fortification, and every other branch of classical literature. Terms, twenty guineas per annum. No extras, no vacation, and diet unparalleled. Mr. Squeers is in town, and attends daily from one till four, at the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill. N.B. An able assistant wanted. Annual salary, £5. A Master of Arts would be preferred."

KATE might have said that mourning is sometimes the coldest wear which mortals can assume; that it not only chills the breasts of those it clothes, but extending its influence to summer friends, freezes up their sources of goodwill and kindness; and withering all the buds of promise they once so liberally put forth, leaves nothing but bared and rotten hearts exposed. There are few who have lost a friend or relative constituting in life their sole dependence, who have not keenly felt this chilling influence of their sable garb. She had felt it acutely, and feeling it at the moment, could not quite restrain her tears.

"I WAS afraid," said Smike, overjoyed to see his friend again, "that you had fallen into some fresh trouble; the time seemed so long, at last, that I almost feared you were lost."

"Lost!" replied Nicholas gayly. "You will not get rid of me so easily, I promise you. I shall rise to the surface many thousand times yet, and the harder the thrust that pushes me down, the more quickly I shall rebound, Smike. But come, my errand here is to take you home."

"Home!" faltered Smike, drawing timidly back.

"Ay," rejoined Nicholas, taking his arm. "Why not?"

"I had such hopes once," said Smike, "day and night, day and night, for many years. I longed for home till I was weary, and pined away with grief; but now—"

"And what now?" asked Nicholas, looking kindly in his face. "What now, old friend?"

"I could not part from you to go to any home on earth," replied Smike, pressing his hand; "except one, except one. I shall never be an old man; and if your hand placed me in the grave, and I could think, before I died, that you would come and look upon it sometimes with one of your kind smiles, and in the summer weather, when everything was alive—not dead like me—I could go to that home, almost without a tear."

"**M**EASLES, rheumatics, hooping-cough, fevers, agers, and lumbagers," said Mr. Squeers, "is all philosophy together; that's what it is. The heavenly bodies is philosophy, and the earthly bodies is philosophy. If there's a screw loose in a heavenly body, that's philosophy; and if there's a screw loose in a earthly body, that's philosophy too; or it may be that sometimes there's a little metaphysics in it, but that's not often. Philosophy's the chap for me. If a parent asks a question in the classical, commercial, or mathematical line, says I, gravely, 'Why, sir, in the first place, are you a philosopher?'—'No, Mr. Squeers,' he says, 'I an't.' 'Then, sir,' says I, 'I am sorry for you, for I shan't be able to explain it.' Naturally, the parent goes away and wishes he was a philosopher, and, equally naturally, thinks I'm one."

"**W**ELL, I never saw such people in all my life as you are, for time, up here!" Mrs. Nickleby would exclaim in great astonishment; "I declare I never did; I had not the least idea that Nicholas was after his time, not the smallest. Mr. Nickleby used to say—your poor papa, I am

speaking of, Kate, my dear—used to say, that appetite was the best clock in the world, but you have no appetite, my dear Miss Bray, I wish you had, and upon my word, I really think you ought to take something that would give you one. I am sure I don't know, but I have heard that two or three dozen native lobsters give an appetite, though that comes to the same thing after all, for I suppose you must have an appetite before you can take 'em. If I said lobsters, I meant oysters, it's all the same. Though really how you came to know about Nicholas—”

FROM DAVID COPPERFIELD.

I GAVE him good-morning, and asked him what o'clock it was. He took out of his pocket the most respectable hunting-watch I ever saw, and preventing the spring with his thumb from opening far, looked in at the face, as if he were consulting an oracular oyster, shut it up again, and said, if I pleased, it was half-past eight.

“THANK you,” said Mr. Micawber, waving his hand as of old, and settling his chin in his shirt-collar. “She is tolerably convalescent. The twins no longer derive their sustenance from Nature's founts—in short,” said Mr. Micawber, in one of his bursts of confidence, “they are weaned—and Mrs. Micawber is at present my travelling companion. She will be rejoiced, Copperfield, to renew her acquaintance with one who has proved himself in all respects a worthy minister at the sacred altar of friendship.”

“I SUPPOSE, sir,” said I, still desiring to spare my aunt, “that it is not the custom here, if an articled clerk were particularly useful, and made himself a perfect master of his

profession—"I could not help blushing, this looked so like praising myself—"I suppose it is not the custom, in the later years of his time, to allow him any—"

Mr. Spenlow, by a great effort, just lifted his head far enough out of his cravat to shake it, and answered, anticipating the word "salary."

"No. I will not say what consideration I might give to that point myself, Mr. Copperfield, if I were unfettered. Mr. Jorkins is immovable."

I was quite dismayed by the idea of this terrible Jorkins. But I found out afterwards that he was a mild man of a heavy temperament, whose place in the business was to keep himself in the background, and be constantly exhibited by name as the most obdurate and ruthless of men. If a clerk wanted his salary raised, Mr. Jorkins wouldn't listen to such a proposition. If a client were slow to settle his bill of costs, Mr. Jorkins was resolved to have it paid; and however painful these things might be (and always were) to the feelings of Mr. Spenlow, Mr. Jorkins would have his bond. The heart and hand of the good angel Spenlow would have been always open, but for the restraining demon, Jorkins. As I have grown older, I think I have had experience of some other houses doing business on the principle of Spenlow and Jorkins.

I FOUND, when I did open it, that it was a very kind note, containing no reference to my condition at the theatre. All it said was, "My dear Trotwood. I am staying at the house of papa's agent, Mr. Waterbrook, in Ely Place, Holborn. Will you come and see me to-day, at any time you like to appoint? Ever yours affectionately, AGNES."

It took me such a long time to write an answer at all to my satisfaction, that I don't know what the ticket-porter can have thought, unless he thought I was learning to write. I must have written half a dozen answers at least. I began one, "How can I ever hope, my dear Agnes, to efface from your

remembrance the disgusting impression"—there I didn't like it, and then I tore it up. I began another, "Shakespeare has observed, my dear Agnes, how strange it is that a man should put an enemy into his mouth"—that reminded me of Markham, and it got no farther. I even tried poetry. I began one note, in a six-syllable line, "Oh, do not remember"—but that associated itself with the fifth of November, and became an absurdity. After many attempts, I wrote, "My dear Agnes. Your letter is like you, and what could I say of it that would be higher praise than that? I will come at four o'clock. Affectionately and sorrowfully, T. C." With this missive (which I was in twenty minds at once about recalling, as soon as it was out of my hands), the ticket-porter at last departed.

"**Y**OU must not forget," said Agnes, calmly changing the conversation as soon as I had concluded, "that you are always to tell me, not only when you fall into trouble, but when you fall in love. Who has succeeded to Miss Larkins, Trotwood?"

"No one, Agnes."

"Some one, Trotwood," said Agnes, laughing, and holding up her finger.

"No, Agnes, upon my word! There is a lady, certainly, at Mrs. Steerforth's house, who is very clever, and whom I like to talk to—Miss Dartle—but I don't adore her."

Agnes laughed again at her own penetration, and told me that if I were faithful to her in my confidence, she thought she should keep a little register of my violent attachments, with the date, duration, and termination of each, like the table of the reigns of the kings and queens in the History of England.

"**O**H, you know, deuce take it," said this gentleman, looking round the board with an imbecile smile, "we can't forego Blood, you know. We must have Blood, you know."

Some young fellows, you know, may be a little behind their station, perhaps, in point of education and behavior, and may go a little wrong, you know, and get themselves and other people into a variety of fixes—and all that—but deuce take it, it's delightful to reflect that they've got Blood in 'em! Myself, I'd rather at any time be knocked down by a man who had got Blood in him, than I'd be picked up by a man who hadn't!"

"HOWEVER," he said, "it's not that we haven't made a beginning towards housekeeping. No, no; we have begun. We must get on by degrees, but we have begun. Here," drawing the cloth off with great pride and care, "are two pieces of furniture to commence with. This flower-pot and stand she bought herself. You put that in a parlor-window," said Traddles, falling a little back from it to survey it with the greater admiration, "with a plant in it, and—and there you are! This little round table with the marble top (it's two feet ten in circumference), I bought. You want to lay a book down, you know, or somebody comes to see you or your wife, and wants a place to stand a cup of tea upon, and—and there you are again!" said Traddles. "It's an admirable piece of workmanship—firm as a rock!"

I praised them both highly, and Traddles replaced the covering as carefully as he had removed it.

"It's not a great deal towards the furnishing," said Traddles, "but it's something. The table-cloths, and pillow-cases, and articles of that kind, are what discourage me most, Copperfield. So does the ironmongery—candle-boxes, and gridirons, and that sort of necessities—because those things tell, and mount up. However, 'wait and hope.' And I assure you she's the dearest girl!"

TO divert his thoughts from this melancholy subject, I informed Mr. Micawber that I relied upon him for a bowl of punch, and led him to the lemons. His recent despond-

ency, not to say despair, was gone in a moment. I never saw a man so thoroughly enjoy himself amid the fragrance of lemon-peel and sugar, the odor of burning rum, and the steam of boiling water, as Mr. Micawber did that afternoon. It was wonderful to see his face shining at us out of a thin cloud of these delicate fumes, as he stirred, and mixed, and tasted, and looked as if he were making, instead of punch, a fortune for his family down to the latest posterity. As to Mrs. Micawber, I don't know whether it was the effect of the cap, or the lavender-water, or the pins, or the fire, or the wax-candles, but she came out of my room, comparatively speaking, lovely. And the lark was never gayer than that excellent woman.

THERE was another thing I could have wished: namely, that Jip had never been encouraged to walk about the table-cloth during dinner. I began to think there was something disorderly in his being there at all, even if he had not been in the habit of putting his foot in the salt or the melted butter. On this occasion he seemed to think he was introduced expressly to keep Traddles at bay; and he barked at my old friend, and made short runs at his plate, with such undaunted pertinacity, that he may be said to have engrossed the conversation.

MY aunt tied the strings of her bonnet (she had come down to breakfast in it), and put on her shawl, as if she were ready for anything that was resolute and uncompromising. Traddles buttoned his coat with a determined air. Mr. Dick, disturbed by these formidable appearances, but feeling it necessary to imitate them, pulled his hat, with both hands, as firmly over his ears as he possibly could; and instantly took it off again, to welcome Mr. Micawber.

AGAIN, Mr. Micawber had a relish in this formal piling up of words, which, however ludicrously displayed in his case, was, I must say, not at all peculiar to him. I have observed

it, in the course of my life, in numbers of men. It seems to me to be a general rule. In the taking of legal oaths, for instance, deponents seems to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea ; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure, or so forth ; and the old anathemas were made relishing on the same principle. We talk about the tyranny of words, but we like to tyrannize over them too ; we are fond of having a large superfluous establishment of words to wait upon us on great occasions ; we think it looks important, and sounds well. As we are not particular about the meaning of our liveries on state occasions, if they be but fine and numerous enough, so, the meaning or necessity of our words is a secondary consideration, if there be but a great parade of them. And as individuals get into trouble by making too great a show of liveries, or as slaves when they are too numerous rise against their masters, so I think I could mention a nation that has got into many great difficulties, and will get into many greater, from maintaining too large a retinue of words.

“**O**R to Mrs. Crewler—it would be the utmost gratification of my wishes, to be a parent to the girls. He replied in a most admirable manner, exceedingly flattering to my feelings, and undertook to obtain the consent of Mrs. Crewler to this arrangement. They had a dreadful time of it with her. It mounted from her legs into her chest, and then into her head—”

“What mounted ?” I asked.

“Her grief,” replied Traddles, with a serious look. “Her feelings generally. As I mentioned on a former occasion, she is a very superior woman, but has lost the use of her limbs. Whatever occurs to harass her, usually settles in her legs ; but on this occasion it mounted to the chest, and then to the head, and, in short, pervaded the whole system in the most alarming manner. However, they brought her through it by unremit-

ting and affectionate attention ; and we were married yesterday six weeks. You have no idea what a Monster I felt, Copperfield, when I saw the whole family crying and fainting away in every direction ! Mrs. Crewler couldn't see me before we left—couldn't forgive me, then, for depriving her of her child—but she is a good creature, and has done so since. I had a delightful letter from her, only this morning.

THE opening of the little door in the panelled wall made me start and turn. Her beautiful, serene eyes met mine as she came towards me. She stopped and laid her hand upon her bosom, and I caught her in my arms.

“Agnes! my dear girl! I have come too suddenly upon you.”

“No, no ! I am so rejoiced to see you, Trotwood !”

“Dear Agnes, the happiness it is to me to see you once again !”

I folded her to my heart, and for a little while we were both silent. Presently we sat down, side by side ; and her angel-face was turned upon me with the welcome I had dreamed of, waking and sleeping, for whole years.

She was so true, she was so beautiful, she was so good—I owed her so much gratitude, she was so dear to me, that I could find no utterance for what I felt. I tried to bless her, tried to thank her, tried to tell her (as I had often done in letters) what an influence she had upon me ; but all my efforts were in vain. My love and joy were dumb.

With her own sweet tranquillity she calmed my agitation ; led me back to the time of our parting ; spoke to me of Emily, whom she had visited in secret many times ; spoke to me tenderly of Dora's grave. With the unerring instinct of her noble heart, she touched the chords of my memory so softly and harmoniously, that not one jarred within me ; I could listen to the sorrowful, distant music, and desire to shrink from nothing it awoke. How could I, when blended with it all was her dear self, the better angel of my life ?

“And you, Agnes,” I said, by and by. “Tell me of yourself. You have hardly ever told me of your own life, in all this lapse of time.”

AND now I tried to tell her of the struggle I had had, and the conclusion I had come to. I tried to lay my mind before her, truly and entirely. I tried to show her how I had hoped I had come into the better knowledge of myself and of her; how I had resigned myself to what that better knowledge brought; and how I had come there, even that day, in my fidelity to this. If she did so love me (I said) that she could take me for her husband, she could do so, on no deserving of mine, except upon the truth of my love for her, and the trouble in which it had ripened to be what it was; and hence it was that I revealed it. And O, Agnes, even out of thy true eyes, in that same time, the spirit of my child-wife looked upon me, saying it was well; and winning me, through thee, to tenderest recollections of the blossom that had withered in its bloom.

“I AM so blest, Trotwood—my heart is so overcharged—but there is one thing I must say.”

“Dearest, what?”

She laid her gentle hands upon my shoulders, and looked calmly in my face.

“Do you know yet what it is?”

“I am afraid to speculate on what it is. Tell me, my dear.”

“I have loved you all my life.”

WITHIN the first week of my passion, I bought four sumptuous waistcoats—not for myself; I had no pride in them; for Dora—and took to wearing straw-colored kid gloves in the streets, and laid the foundations of all the corns I have ever had. If the boots I wore at that period could only

be produced and compared with the natural size of my feet, they would show what the state of my heart was in a most affecting manner.

And yet, wretched cripple as I made myself by this act of homage to Dora, I walked miles upon miles daily in the hope of seeing her. Not only was I soon as well known on the Norwood Road as the postmen on that beat, but I pervaded London likewise. I walked about the streets where the best shops for ladies were, I haunted the Bazaar like an unquiet spirit, I fagged through the Park again and again, long after I was quite knocked up. Sometimes, at long intervals and on rare occasions, I saw her. Perhaps I saw her glove waved in a carriage-window ; perhaps I met her, walked with her and Miss Murdstone a little way, and spoke to her. In the latter case I was always very miserable afterwards, to think that I had said nothing to the purpose ; or that she had no idea of the extent of my devotion ; or that she cared nothing about me. I was always looking out, as may be supposed, for another invitation to Mr. Spenlow's house. I was always being disappointed, for I got none.

WHEN Dora hung her head and cried and trembled, my eloquence increased so much the more. If she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. Life without Dora's love was not a thing to have on any terms. I couldn't bear it, and I wouldn't. I had loved her every minute, day and night, since I first saw her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again ; but no lover had ever loved, might, could, would, or should ever love, as I loved Dora. The more I raved, the more Jip barked. Each of us, in his own way, got more mad every moment.

FROM THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

BUSINESS disposed of, Mr. Swiveller was inwardly reminded of its being nigh dinner-time, and to the intent that his health might not be endangered by longer abstinence, despatched a message to the nearest eating-house requiring an immediate supply of boiled beef and greens for two. With this demand, however, the eating-house (having experience of its customer) declined to comply, churlishly sending back for answer that if Mr. Swiveller stood in need of beef perhaps he would be so obliging as to come there and eat it, bringing with him, as grace before meat, the amount of a certain small account which had been long outstanding. Not at all intimidated by this rebuff, but rather sharpened in wits and appetite, Mr. Swiveller forwarded the same message to another and more distant eating-house, adding to it by way of rider that the gentleman was induced to send so far, not only by the great fame and popularity its beef had acquired, but in consequence of the extreme toughness of the beef retailed at the obdurate cook's shop, which rendered it quite unfit not merely for gentlemanly food but for any human consumption. The good effect of this politic course was demonstrated by the speedy arrival of a small pewter pyramid, curiously constructed of platters and covers, whereof the boiled-beef-plates formed the base, and a foaming quart-pot the apex ; the structure being resolved into its component parts afforded all things requisite and necessary for a hearty meal, to which Mr. Swiveller and his friend applied themselves with great keenness and enjoyment.

“May the present moment,” said Dick, sticking his fork into a large carbuncular potato, “be the worst of our lives ! I like this plan of sending ’em with the peel on ; there’s a charm in drawing a potato from its native element (if I may so express it) to which the rich and powerful are strangers. Ah ! ‘Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long !’ How true that is !—after dinner.”

"I hope the eating-house keeper will want but little and that *he* may not want that little long," returned his companion ; "but I suspect you've no means of paying for this !"

"I shall be passing presently, and I'll call," said Dick, winking his eye significantly. "The waiter's quite helpless. The goods are gone, Fred, and there's an end of it."

In point of fact, it would seem that the waiter felt this wholesome truth, for when he returned for the empty plates and dishes and was informed by Mr. Swiveller with dignified carelessness that he would call and settle when he should be passing presently, he displayed some perturbation of spirit, and muttered a few remarks about "payment on delivery," and "no trust," and other unpleasant subjects, but was fain to content himself with inquiring at what hour it was likely the gentleman would call, in order that being personally responsible for the beef, greens, and sundries, he might take care to be in the way at the time. Mr. Swiveller, after mentally calculating his engagements to a nicety, replied that he should look in at from two minutes before six to seven minutes past ; and the man disappearing with this feeble consolation, Richard Swiveller took a greasy memorandum-book from his pocket and made an entry therein.

"Is that a reminder in case you should forget to call?" said Trent with a sneer.

"Not exactly, Fred," replied the imperturbable Richard, continuing to write with a business-like air, "I enter in this little book the names of the streets that I can't go down while the shops are open. This dinner to-day closes Long Acre. I bought a pair of boots in Great Queen Street last week, and made that no thoroughfare too. There's only one avenue in the Strand left open now, and I shall have to stop up that to-night with a pair of gloves. The roads are closing so fast in every direction, that in about a month's time, unless my aunt sends me a remittance, I shall have to go three or four miles out of the way to get over the way."

"There's no fear of her failing, in the end?" said Trent.

“Why, I hope not,” returned Mr. Swiveller, “but the average number of letters it takes to soften her is six, and this time we have got as far as eight without any effect at all. I’ll write another to-morrow morning. I mean to blot it a good deal and shake some water over it out of the pepper-castor, to make it look penitent. ‘I’m in such a state of mind that I hardly know what I write’—blot—‘if you could see me at this minute shedding tears for my past misconduct’—pepper-castor—‘my hand trembles when I think’—blot again—if that don’t produce the effect, it’s all over.”

“**H**ERE’S a bird! What’s to be done with this?”

“Wring its neck,” rejoined Quilp.

“Oh no, don’t do that,” said Kit, stepping forward. “Give it to me.”

“Oh yes, I dare say,” cried the other boy. “Come! You let the cage alone, and let me wring its neck, will you? He said I was to do it. You let the cage alone, will you?”

“Give it here, give it to me, you dogs,” roared Quilp. “Fight for it, you dogs, or I’ll wring its neck myself!”

Without further persuasion, the two boys fell upon each other, tooth and nail, while Quilp, holding up the cage in one hand, and chopping the ground with his knife in an ecstasy, urged them on by his taunts and cries to fight more fiercely. They were a pretty equal match, and rolled about together, exchanging blows which were by no means child’s play, until at length Kit, planting a well-directed hit in his adversary’s chest, disengaged himself, sprung nimbly up, and snatching the cage from Quilp’s hands made off with his prize.

He did not stop once, until he reached home, where his bleeding face occasioned great consternation, and caused the elder child to howl dreadfully.

“Goodness gracious, Kit, what is the matter, what have you been doing?” cried Mrs. Nubbles.

“Never you mind, mother,” answered her son, wiping his

face on the jack-towel behind the door. "I'm not hurt, don't you be afraid for me. I've been a-fightin' for a bird and won him, that's all. Hold your noise, little Jacob. I never see such a naughty boy in all my days!"

"You have been a-fighting for a bird!" exclaimed his mother.

"Ah! Fightin' for a bird!" replied Kit, "and here he is—Miss Nelly's bird, mother, that they was a-goin' to wring the neck of! I stopped that though—ha, ha, ha! They wouldn't wring his neck and me by, no, no. It wouldn't do, mother, it wouldn't do at all. Ha, ha, ha!"

Kit laughing so heartily, with his swollen and bruised face looking out of the towel, made little Jacob laugh, and then his mother laughed, and then the baby crowed and kicked with great glee, and then they all laughed in concert: partly because of Kit's triumph, and partly because they were very fond of each other. When this fit was over, Kit exhibited the bird to both children, as a great and precious rarity—it was only a poor linnet—and looking about the wall for an old nail, made a scaffolding of a chair and table and twisted it out with great exultation.

"Let me see," said the boy, "I think I'll hang him in the winder, because it's more light and cheerful, and he can see the sky there, if he looks up very much. He's such a one to sing, I can tell you!"

So the scaffolding was made again, and Kit, climbing up with the poker for a hammer, knocked in the nail and hung up the cage, to the immeasurable delight of the whole family. When it had been adjusted and straightened a great many times, and he had walked backwards into the fire-place in his admiration of it, the arrangement was pronounced to be perfect.

"And now, mother," said the boy, "before I rest any more, I'll go out to see if I can find a horse to hold, and then I can buy some bird-seed, and a bit of something nice for you, in the bargain."

THE town was glad with morning light ; places that had shown ugly and distrustful all night long, now wore a smile ; and sparkling sunbeams dancing on chamber-windows, and twinkling through blind and curtain before sleepers' eyes, shed light even into dreams, and chased away the shadows of the night. Birds in hot rooms, covered up close and dark, felt it was morning, and chafed and grew restless in their little cells ; bright-eyed mice crept back to their tiny homes and nestled timidly together ; the sleek house-cat, forgetful of her prey, sat winking at the rays of sun starting through key-hole and cranny of the door, and longed for her stealthy run and warm sleek bask outside. The nobler beasts confined in dens stood motionless behind their bars, and gazed on fluttering boughs, and sunshine peeping through some little window, with eyes in which old forests gleamed—then trod impatiently the track their prisoned feet had worn—and stopped and gazed again. Men in their dungeons stretched their cramp, cold limbs and cursed the stone that no bright sky could warm. The flowers that slept by night opened their gentle eyes and turned them to the day. The light, creation's mind, was everywhere, and all things owned its power.

WHEN the festoons were all put up as tastily as they might be, the stupendous collection was uncovered, and there were displayed, on a raised platform some two feet from the floor, running around the room and parted from the rude public by a crimson rope breast-high, divers sprightly effigies of celebrated characters, singly and in groups, clad in glittering dresses of various climes and times, and standing more or less unsteadily upon their legs, with their eyes very wide open, and their nostrils very much inflated, and the muscles of their legs and arms very strongly developed, and all their countenances expressing great surprise. All the gentlemen were very pigeon-breasted and very blue about the beards ; and all the ladies were miraculous figures ; and all the ladies and all

the gentlemen were looking intensely nowhere, and staring with extraordinary earnestness at nothing.

When Nell had exhausted her first raptures at this glorious sight, Mrs. Jarley ordered the room to be cleared of all but herself and the child, and, sitting herself down in an arm-chair in the centre, formally invested Nell with a willow wand, long used by herself for pointing out the characters, and was at great pains to instruct her in her duty.

"That," said Mrs. Jarley in her exhibition tone, as Nell touched a figure at the beginning of the platform, "is an unfortunate Maid of Honor in the time of Queen Elizabeth, who died from pricking her finger in consequence of working upon a Sunday. Observe the blood which is trickling from her finger; also the gold-eyed needle of the period, with which she is at work."

All this Nell repeated twice or thrice, pointing to the finger and the needle at the right times, and then passed on to the next.

"That, ladies and gentlemen," said Mrs. Jarley, "is Jasper Packlemerton, of atrocious memory, who courted and married fourteen wives, and destroyed them all by tickling the soles of their feet when they were sleeping in the consciousness of innocence and virtue. On being brought to the scaffold and asked if he was sorry for what he had done, he replied yes, he was sorry for having let 'em off so easy, and hoped all Christian husbands would pardon him the offence. Let this be a warning to all young ladies to be particular in the character of the gentlemen of their choice. Observe that his fingers are curled as if in the act of tickling, and that his face is represented with a wink, as he appeared when committing his barbarous murders."

FROM BARNABY RUDGE.

“MY meaning is, that you must do as I did; that you must marry well and make the most of yourself.”

“A mere fortune-hunter!” cried the son indignantly.

“What in the devil’s name, Ned, would you be!” returned the father. “All men are fortune-hunters, are they not? The law, the church, the court, the camp—see how they are all crowded with fortune-hunters, jostling each other in the pursuit. The Stock Exchange, the pulpit, the counting-house, the royal drawing-room, the Senate—what but fortune-hunters are they filled with? A fortune-hunter! Yes. You *are* one; and you would be nothing else, my dear Ned, if you were the greatest courtier, lawyer, legislator, prelate, or merchant, in existence. If you are squeamish and moral, Ned, console yourself with the reflection that at the worst your fortune-hunting can make but one person miserable or unhappy. How many people do you suppose these other kinds of huntsmen crush in following their sport—hundreds at a step? Or thousands?”

MEN who are thoroughly false and hollow seldom try to hide those vices from themselves; and yet in the very act of avowing them, they lay claim to the virtues they feign most to despise. “For,” say they, “this is honesty, this is truth. All mankind are like us, but they have not the candor to avow it.” The more they affect to deny the existence of any sincerity in the world, the more they would be thought to possess it in its boldest shape; and this is an unconscious compliment to Truth on the part of these philosophers, which will turn the laugh against them to the Day of Judgment.

WHETHER people, by dint of sitting together in the same place and the same relative positions, and doing exactly the same things for a great many years, acquire a sixth

sense, or some unknown power of influencing each other which serves them in its stead, is a question for philosophy to settle. But certain it is that old John Willet, Mr. Parkes, and Mr. Cobb were one and all firmly of opinion that they were very jolly companions—rather choice spirits than otherwise ; that they looked at each other every now and then as if there were a perpetual interchange of ideas going on among them ; that no man considered himself or his neighbor by any means silent ; and that each of them nodded occasionally when he caught the eye of another, as if he would say, “ You have expressed yourself extremely well, sir, in relation to that sentiment, and I quite agree with you.”

ALTHOUGH there was something very ludicrous in his vehement manner, taken in conjunction with his meagre aspect and ungraceful presence, it would scarcely have provoked a smile in any man of kindly feeling ; or even if it had, he would have felt sorry and almost angry with himself next moment, for yielding to the impulse. This lord was sincere in his violence and in his wavering. A nature prone to false enthusiasm, and the vanity of being a leader, were the worst qualities apparent in his composition. All the rest was weakness—sheer weakness ; and it is the unhappy lot of thoroughly weak men, that their very sympathies, affections, confidences—all the qualities which in better-constituted minds are virtues—dwindle into foibles, or turn into downright vices.

“ **Y**OU do wrong not to fill your glass,” said Mr. Chester, holding up his own before the light. “ Wine in moderation—not in excess, for that makes men ugly—has a thousand pleasant influences. It brightens the eye, improves the voice, imparts a new vivacity to one’s thoughts and conversation : you should try it, Ned.”

“ Ah father ! ” cried his son, “ if—”

“My good fellow,” interposed the parent hastily, as he set down his glass, and raised his eyebrows with a startled and horrified expression, “for Heaven’s sake don’t call me by that obsolete and ancient name. Have some regard for delicacy. Am I gray, or wrinkled, do I go on crutches, have I lost my teeth, that you adopt such a mode of address? Good God, how very coarse !”

“I was about to speak to you from my heart, sir,” returned Edward, “in the confidence which should subsist between us ; and you check me in the outset.”

“Now *do*, Ned, *do* not,” said Mr. Chester, raising his delicate hand imploringly, “talk in that monstrous manner. ‘About to speak from your heart !’ Don’t you know that the heart is an ingenious part of our formation—the centre of the blood-vessels, and all that sort of thing—which has no more to do with what you say or think than your knees have? How can you be so very vulgar and absurd? These anatomical allusions should be left to gentlemen of the medical profession. They are really not agreeable in society. You quite surprise me, Ned.”

“Well ! there are no such things to wound, or heal, or have regard for. I know your creed, sir, and will say no more,” returned his son.

“There again,” said Mr. Chester, sipping his wine, “you are wrong. I distinctly say there are such things. We know there are. The hearts of animals—bullocks, sheep, and so forth—are cooked and devoured, as I am told, by the lower classes, with a vast deal of relish. Men are sometimes stabbed to the heart, shot to the heart ; but as to speaking from the heart, or to the heart, or being warm-hearted, or cold-hearted, or broken-hearted, or being all heart, or having no heart—pah ! these things are nonsense, Ned.”

TO surround anything, however monstrous or ridiculous, with an air of mystery, is to invest it with a secret charm, and power of attraction which to the crowd is irresistible.

ble. False priests, false prophets, false doctors, false patriots, false prodigies of every kind, veiling their proceedings in mystery, have always addressed themselves at an immense advantage to the popular credulity, and have been, perhaps, more indebted to that resource in gaining and keeping for a time the upper hand of Truth and Common Sense, than to any half-dozen items in the whole catalogue of imposture. Curiosity is, and has been, from the creation of the world, a master-passion. To awaken it, to gratify it by slight degrees, and yet leave something always in suspense, is to establish the surest hold that can be had, in wrong, on the unthinking portion of mankind.

THE three went staggering on, arm-in-arm, shouting like madmen, and defying the watch with great valor. Indeed, this did not require any unusual bravery or boldness, as the watchmen of that time, being selected for the office on account of excessive age and extraordinary infirmity, had a custom of shutting themselves up tight in their boxes on the first symptoms of disturbance, and remaining there until they disappeared.

A MOB is usually a creature of very mysterious existence, particularly in a large city. Where it comes from, or whither it goes, few men can tell. Assembling and dispersing with equal suddenness, it is as difficult to follow to its various sources as the sea itself; nor does the parallel stop here, for the ocean is not more fickle and uncertain, more terrible when roused, more unreasonable, or more cruel.

IN the exhaustless catalogue of Heaven's mercies to mankind, the power we have of finding some germs of comfort in the hardest trials must ever occupy the foremost place; not only because it supports and upholds us when we most require

to be sustained, but because in this source of consolation there is something, we have reason to believe, of the Divine Spirit ; something of that goodness which detects amidst our own evil doings a redeeming quality ; something which, even in our fallen nature, we possess in common with the angels ; which had its being in the old time when they trod the earth, and lingers on it yet, in pity.

How often, on their journey, did the widow remember with a grateful heart, that out of his deprivation Barnaby's cheerfulness and affection sprung ! How often did she call to mind that but for that, he might have been sullen, morose, unkind, far removed from her—vicious, perhaps, and cruel ! How often had she cause for comfort, in his strength and hope, and in his simple nature ! Those feeble powers of mind which rendered him so soon forgetful of the past, save in brief gleams and flashes—even they were a comfort now. The world to him was full of happiness ; in every tree, and plant, and flower, in every bird and beast, and tiny insect whom a breath of summer wind laid low upon the ground, he had delight. His delight was hers ; and where many a wise son would have made her sorrowful, this poor light-hearted idiot filled her breast with thankfulness and love.

IT was a solemn sound, and not merely for its reference to to-morrow ; for he knew that in that chime the murderer's knell was rung. He had seen him pass along the crowded street, amidst the execrations of the throng ; had marked his quivering lip, and trembling limbs ; the ashy hue upon his face, his clammy brow, the wild distraction of his eye—the fear of death that swallowed up all other thoughts, and gnawed without cessation at his heart and brain. He had marked the wandering look, seeking for hope, and finding, turn where it would, despair. He had seen the remorseful, pitiful, desolate creature, riding, with his coffin by his side, to the gibbet. He knew that, to the last, he had been an unyielding, obdurate man ;

that in the savage terror of his condition he had hardened, rather than relented, to his wife and child ; and that the last words which had passed his white lips were curses on them as his enemies.

LET no man turn aside, ever so slightly, from the broad path of honor, on the plausible pretence that he is justified by the goodness of his end. All good ends can be worked out by good means. Those that cannot, are bad ; and may be counted so at once, and left alone.

THE ashes of the commonest fire are melancholy things, for in them there is an image of death and ruin—of something that has been bright, and is but dull, cold, dreary dust—with which our nature forces us to sympathize. How much more sad the crumbled embers of a home ; the casting down of that great altar, where the worst among us sometimes perform the worship of the heart ; and where the best have offered up such sacrifices, and done such deeds of heroism, as, chronicled, would put the proudest temples of old Time, with all their vaunting annals, to the blush.

FROM DOMBEY AND SON.

“SO, if you ever see her, uncle,” said Walter, “I mean Miss Dombey now—and perhaps you may, who knows !—tell her how much I felt for her ; how much I used to think of her when I was here ; how I spoke of her, with the tears in my eyes, uncle, on this last night before I went away. Tell her that I said I never could forget her gentle manner, or her beautiful face, or her sweet, kind disposition, that was better than all. And as I didn’t take them from a woman’s feet, or a

young lady's, only a little innocent child's," said Walter; "tell her, if you don't mind, uncle, that I kept those shoes—she'll remember how often they fell off, that night—and took them away with me as a remembrance!"

"**A**ND, Wal'r," said the Captain, when they took their seats at table, "if your uncle's the man I think him, he'll bring out the last bottle of *the* Madeira on the present occasion."

"No, no, Ned," returned the old man. "No! That shall be opened when Walter comes home again."

"Well said!" cried the Captain. "Hear him!"

"There it lies," said Sol Gills, "down in the little cellar, covered with dirt and cobwebs. There may be dirt and cobwebs over you and me, perhaps, Ned, before it sees the light."

"Hear him!" cried the Captain, "good morality! Wal'r, my lad. Train up a fig-tree in the way it should go, and when you are old sit under the shade on it. Overhaul the—Well," said the Captain on second thoughts, "I ain't quite certain where that's to be found, but when found, make a note of. Sol Gills, heave ahead again!"

"But there, or somewhere, it shall lie, Ned, until Wally comes back to claim it," said the old man. "That's all I meant to say."

"And well said too," returned the Captain; "and if we three don't crack that bottle in company, I'll give you two leave to drink my allowance!"

"**F**LORENCE," said the lady, hurriedly, and looking into her face with great earnestness, "you will not begin by hating me?"

"By hating you, mamma?" cried Florence, winding her arm round her neck, and returning the look.

"Hush! Begin by thinking well of me," said the beautiful

ady. "Begin by believing that I will try to make you happy, and that I am prepared to love you, Florence. Good-by. We shall meet again soon. Good-by! Don't stay here, now."

Again she pressed her to her breast—she had spoken in a rapid manner, but firmly—and Florence saw her rejoin them in the other room.

And now Florence began to hope that she would learn from her new and beautiful mamma how to gain her father's love; and in her sleep that night, in her lost old home, her own mamma smiled radiantly upon the hope, and blessed it. Dreaming Florence!

"POLLY, my gal," said Mr. Toodle, with a young Toodle on each knee, and two more making tea for him, and plenty more scattered about—Mr. Toodle was never out of children, but always kept a good supply on hand—"you an't seen our Biler lately, have you?"

"IN point of fact, it's nothing of a story in itself," said Cousin Feenix, addressing the table with a smile, and a gay shake of his head, "and not worth a word of preface. But it's illustrative of the neatness of Jack's humor. The fact is, that Jack was invited down to a marriage—which I think took place in Barkshire?"

"Shropshire," said the bold mild man, finding himself appealed to.

"Was it? Well! In point of fact, it might have been in any shire," said Cousin Feenix. "So my friend being invited down to this marriage in Anyshire," with a pleasant sense of the readiness of this joke, "goes. Just as some of us, having had the honor of being invited to the marriage of my lovely and accomplished relative with my friend Dombey, didn't require to be asked twice, and were devilish glad to be present on so interesting an occasion.—Goes—Jack goes. Now, this

marriage was, in point of fact, the marriage of an uncommonly fine girl with a man for whom she didn't care a button, but whom she accepted on account of his property, which was immense. When Jack returned to town, after the nuptials, a man he knew, meeting him in the lobby of the House of Commons, says, 'Well, Jack, how are the ill-matched couple?' 'Ill-matched?' says Jack. 'Not at all. It's a perfectly fair and equal transaction. *She* is regularly bought, and you may take your oath *he* is as regularly sold!'"

AND how goes the wooden Midshipman in these changed days? Why, here he still is, right leg foremost, hard at work upon the hackney-coaches, and more on the alert than ever, being newly-painted from his cocked hat to his buckled shoes; and up above him, in golden characters, these names shine refulgent, GILLS AND CUTTLE.

Not another stroke of business does the Midshipman achieve beyond his usual easy trade. But they do say, in a circuit of some half-mile round the blue umbrella in Leadenhall Market, that some of Mr. Gills's old investments are coming out wonderfully well; and that instead of being behind the time in those respects, as he supposed, he was, in truth, a little before it, and had to wait the fulness of the time and the design. The whisper is that Mr. Gills's money has begun to turn itself, and that it is turning itself over and over pretty briskly. Certain it is that, standing at his shop-door, in his coffee-colored suit, with his chronometer in his pocket, and his spectacles on his forehead, he don't appear to break his heart at customers not coming, but looks very jovial and contented, though full as misty as of yore.

As to his partner, Captain Cuttle, there is a fiction of a business in the Captain's mind which is better than any reality. The Captain is as satisfied of the Midshipman's importance to the commerce and navigation of the country, as he could possibly be, if no ship left the Port of London without the Midship-

man's assistance. His delight in his own name over the door, is inexhaustible. He crosses the street, twenty times a day, to look at it from the other side of the way ; and invariably says, on these occasions, "Ed'ard Cuttle, my lad, if your mother could ha' know'd as you would ever be a man o' science, the good old creetur would ha' been took aback indeed !"

LONG may it remain in this mixed world a point not easy of decision, which is the more beautiful evidence of the Almighty's goodness—the delicate fingers that are formed for sensitiveness and sympathy of touch, and made to minister to pain and grief, or the rough hard Captain Cuttle hand, that the heart teaches, guides, and softens in a moment.

Florence slept upon her couch, forgetful of her homelessness and orphanage, and Captain Cuttle watched upon the stairs. A louder sob or moan than usual brought him sometimes to her door, but by degrees she slept more peacefully and the Captain's watch was undisturbed.

BURIED wine grows older, as the old Madeira did, in its time ; and dust and cobwebs thicken on the bottles.

Autumn days are shining, and on the sea-beach there are often a young lady, and a white-haired gentleman. With them, or near them, are two children, boy and girl. And an old dog is generally in their company.

The white-haired gentleman walks with the little boy, talks with him, helps him in his play, attends upon him, watches him, as if he were the object of his life. If he be thoughtful, the white-haired gentleman is thoughtful too ; and sometimes when the child is sitting by his side, and looks up in his face, asking him questions, he takes the tiny hand in his, and holding it, forgets to answer. Then the child says :

"What, grandpapa ! Am I so like my poor little uncle again ?"

"Yes, Paul. But he was weak, and you are very strong."

"Oh yes, I am very strong."

“And he lay on a little bed beside the sea, and you can run about.”

And so they range away again; busily, for the white-haired gentleman likes best to see the child free and stirring; and as they go about together, the story of the bond between them goes about, and follows them.

But no one, except Florence, knows the measure of the white-haired gentleman's affection for the girl. That story never goes about. The child herself almost wonders at a certain secrecy he keeps in it. He hoards her in his heart. He cannot bear to see a cloud upon her face. He cannot bear to see her sit apart. He fancies that she feels a slight, when there is none. He steals away to look at her, in her sleep. It pleases him to have her come, and wake him in the morning. He is fondest of her and most loving to her, when there is no creature by. The child says then, sometimes :

“Dear grandpa, why do you cry when you kiss me?”

He only answers “Little Florence! Little Florence!” and smooths away the curls that shade her earnest eyes.

AND again he said “Dom-bey and Son,” in exactly the same tone as before.

Those three words conveyed the one idea of Mr. Dombey's life. The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre. Common abbreviations took new meanings in his eyes, and had sole reference to them: A. D. had no concern with *anno Domini*, but stood for *anno Dombei*—and Son.

NOW it is certain that Mr. Toots had a filmy something in his mind, which led him to conclude that if he could aspire successfully, in the fulness of time, to the hand of Flor-

ence, he would be fortunate and blest. It is certain that Mr. Toots, by some remote and roundabout road, had got to that point, and that there he made a stand. His heart was wounded ; he was touched ; he was in love. He had made a desperate attempt, one night, and had sat up all night for the purpose, to write an acrostic on Florence, which affected him to tears in the conception. But he never proceeded in the execution farther than the words "For when I gaze,"—the flow of imagination in which he had previously written down the initial letters of the other seven lines, deserting him at that point.

Beyond devising that very artful and politic measure of leaving a card for Mr. Dombey daily, the brain of Mr. Toots had not worked much in reference to the subject that held his feelings prisoner. But deep consideration at length assured Mr. Toots that an important step to gain was, the conciliation of Miss Susan Nipper, preparatory to giving her some inkling of his state of mind.

A little light and playful gallantry towards this lady seemed the means to employ in that early chapter of the history, for winning her to his interests. Not being able quite to make up his mind about it, he consulted the Chicken—without taking that gentleman into his confidence ; merely informing him that a friend in Yorkshire had written to him (Mr. Toots) for his opinion on such a question. The Chicken replying that his opinion always was, "Go in and win," and further, "When your man's before you, and your work cut out, go in and do it, Mr. Toots considered this a figurative way of supporting his own view of the case, and heroically resolved to kiss Miss Nipper next day.

Upon the next day, therefore, Mr. Toots, putting into requisition some of the greatest marvels that Burgess and Co. had ever turned out, went off to Mr. Dombey's upon this design. But his heart failed him so much as he approached the scene of action, that although he arrived on the ground at three o'clock in the afternoon, it was six before he knocked at the door.

Everything happened as usual, down to the point where Susan said her young Mistress was well, and Mr. Toots said it was of no consequence. To her amazement, Mr. Toots, instead of going off, like a rocket, after that observation, lingered and chuckled.

“Perhaps you’d like to walk upstairs, sir!” said Susan.

“Well, I think I will come in!” said Mr. Toots.

But instead of walking upstairs, the bold Toots made an awkward plunge at Susan when the door was shut, and embracing that fair creature, kissed her on the cheek.

“Go along with you!” cried Susan, “or I’ll tear your eyes out.”

“Just another!” said Mr. Toots.

“Go along with you!” exclaimed Susan, giving him a push. “Innocents like you, too! Who’ll begin next? Go along, sir!”

Susan was not in any serious strait, for she could hardly speak out for laughing; but Diogenes, on the staircase, hearing a rustling against the wall, and a shuffling of feet, and seeing through the banisters that there was some contention going on, and foreign invasion in the house, formed a different opinion, dashed down to the rescue, and in the twinkling of an eye had Mr. Toots by the leg.

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

EVEN those tokens of the season which emphatically whispered of the coming winter, graced the landscape, and, for the moment, tinged its livelier features with no oppressive air of sadness. The fallen leaves, with which the ground was strewn, gave forth a pleasant fragrance, and subduing all harsh sounds of distant feet and wheels, created a repose in gentle unison with the light scattering of seed hither and thither

by the distant husbandman, and with the noiseless passage of the plough as it turned up the rich brown earth, and wrought a graceful pattern in the stubbled fields. On the motionless branches of some trees, autumn berries hung like clusters of coral beads, as in those fabled orchards where the fruits were jewels; others, stripped of all their garniture, stood, each the centre of its little heap of bright red leaves, watching their slow decay; others again, still wearing theirs, had them all crunched and crackled up, as though they had been burnt; about the stems of some were piled, in ruddy mounds, the apples they had borne that year; while others (hardy evergreens, this class) showed somewhat stern and gloomy in their vigor, as charged by Nature with the admonition that it is not to her more sensitive and joyous favorites she grants the longest term of life. Still athwart their darker boughs, the sunbeams struck out paths of deeper gold; and the red light, mantling in among their swarthy branches, used them as foils to set its brightness off, and aid the lustre of the dying day.

“**A**ND yet,” said Pinch, pursuing his own thoughts, and not this last remark on the part of his friend, “I must have a good deal of what you call the devil in me, too, or how could I make Pecksniff so uncomfortable? I wouldn’t have occasioned him so much distress—don’t laugh, please—for a mine of money; and Heaven knows I could find good use for it too, John. How grieved he was!”

“*He* grieved!” returned the other.

“Why, didn’t you observe that the tears were almost starting out of his eyes!” cried Pinch. “Bless my soul, John, is it nothing to see a man moved to that extent, and know one’s self to be the cause! And did you hear him say that he could have shed his blood for me?”

“Do you *want* any blood shed for you?” returned his friend, with considerable irritation. “Does he shed anything for you that you *do* want? Does he shed employment for you, in-

struction for you, pocket-money for you ? Does he shed even legs of mutton for you in any decent proportion to potatoes and garden stuff ? ”

WHEN Mr. Pecksniff and the two young ladies got into the heavy coach at the end of the lane, they found it empty, which was a great comfort ; particularly as the outside was quite full, and the passengers looked very frosty. For as Mr. Pecksniff justly observed—when he and his daughters had burrowed their feet deep in the straw, wrapped themselves to the chin, and pulled up both windows—it is always satisfactory to feel, in keen weather, that many other people are not as warm as you are. And this, he said, was quite natural, and a very beautiful arrangement ; not confined to coaches, but extending itself into many social ramifications. “ For ” (he observed), “ if every one were warm and well-fed, we should lose the satisfaction of admiring the fortitude with which certain conditions of men bear cold and hunger. And if we were no better off than anybody else, what would become of our sense of gratitude ; which,” said Mr. Pecksniff, with tears in his eyes, as he shook his fist at a beggar who wanted to get up behind, “ is one of the holiest feelings of our common nature.”

“ I NTERVIEW succeeded interview ; words engendered words, as they always do ; and the upshot of it was, that I was to renounce her, or be renounced by him. Now, you must bear in mind, Pinch, that I am not only desperately fond of her (for though she is poor, her beauty and intellect would reflect great credit on anybody, I don’t care of what pretensions, who might become her husband), but that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined—”

“ Obstinacy,” suggested Tom in perfect good faith. But the suggestion was not so well received as he had expected ; for the young man immediately rejoined, with some irritation,

“ What a fellow you are, Pinch ! ”

"I beg your pardon," said Tom, "I thought you wanted a word."

"I didn't want that word," he rejoined. "I told you obstinacy was no part of my character, did I not? I was going to say, if you had given me leave, that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined firmness."

"Oh!" cried Tom, screwing up his mouth, and nodding. "Yes, yes; I see!"

"And being firm," pursued Martin, "of course I was not going to yield to him, or give way by so much as the thousandth part of an inch."

"No, no," said Tom.

"On the contrary, the more he urged, the more I was determined to oppose him."

"**S**UCH liveliness as yours, I mean, you know," observed Mr. Jonas, as he nudged her with his elbow. "I should have come to see you before, but I didn't know where you was. How quick you hurried off, that morning!"

"I was amenable to my papa's directions," said Miss Charity.

"I wish he had given me his direction," returned her cousin, "and then I should have found you out before. Why, I shouldn't have found you even now, if I hadn't met him in the street this morning. What a sleek, sly chap he is! Just like a tom-cat, an't he?"

"I must trouble you to have the goodness to speak more respectfully of my papa, Mr. Jonas," said Charity. "I can't allow such a tone as that, even in jest."

"Ecod, you may say what you like of *my* father, then, and so I give you leave," said Jonas. "I think it's liquid aggravation that circulates through his veins, and not regular blood. How old should you think my father was, cousin?"

"Old, no doubt," replied Miss Charity; "but a fine old gentleman."

"A fine old gentleman!" repeated Jonas, giving the crown

of his hat an angry knock. "Ah! it's time he was thinking of being drawn out a little finer too. Why, he's eighty!"

"Is he, indeed?" said the young lady.

"And ecod," cried Jonas, "now he's gone so far without giving in, I don't see much to prevent his being ninety; no, nor even a hundred. Why, a man with any feeling ought to be ashamed of being eighty, let alone more. Where's his religion, I should like to know, when he goes flying in the face of the Bible like that? Threescore-and-ten's the mark; and no man with a conscience, and a proper sense of what's expected of him, has any business to live longer."

Is any one surprised at Mr. Jonas making such a reference to such a book for such a purpose? Does any one doubt the old saw, that the Devil (being a layman) quotes Scripture for his own ends? If he will take the trouble to look about him, he may find a greater number of confirmations of the fact, in the occurrences of any single day, than the steam-gun can discharge balls in a minute.

IT was very affecting, very. Nothing more dismal could have been desired by the most fastidious taste. The gentleman of a vocal turn was head mute, or chief mourner; Jenkins took the bass; and the rest took anything they could get. The youngest gentleman blew his melancholy into a flute. He didn't blow much out of it, but that was all the better. If the two Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers had perished by spontaneous combustion, and the serenade had been in honor of their ashes, it would have been impossible to surpass the unutterable despair expressed in that one chorus, "Go where glory waits thee!" It was a requiem, a dirge, a moan, a howl, a wail, a lament, an abstract of everything that is sorrowful and hideous in sound. The flute of the youngest gentleman was wild and fitful. It came and went in gusts, like the wind. For a long time together he seemed to have left off, and when it was quite settled by Mrs. Todgers and the

young ladies, that, overcome by his feelings, he had retired in tears, he unexpectedly turned up again at the very top of the tune, gasping for breath. He was a tremendous performer. There was no knowing where to have him ; and exactly when you thought he was doing nothing at all, then was he doing the very thing that ought to astonish you most.

THAT excellent gentleman, deeming that the mourner wanted comfort, and that high feeding was likely to do him infinite service, availed himself of these opportunities to such good purpose, that they kept quite a dainty table during this melancholy season : with sweetbreads, stewed kidneys, oysters, and other such light viands for supper every night ; over which, and sundry jorums of hot punch, Mr. Pecksniff delivered such moral reflections and spiritual consolation as might have converted a heathen—especially if he had had but an imperfect acquaintance with the English tongue.

“FOR myself, my conscience is my bank. I have a trifle invested there, a mere trifle, Mr. Jones ; but I prize it as a store of value, I assure you.”

The good man’s enemies would have divided upon this question into two parties. One would have asserted without scruple that if Mr. Pecksniff’s conscience were his bank, and he kept a running account there, he must have overdrawn it beyond all mortal means of computation. The other would have contended that it was a mere fictitious form ; a perfectly blank book, or one in which entries were only made with a peculiar kind of invisible ink, to become legible at some indefinite time ; and that he never troubled it at all.

“It would sadly pinch and cramp me, my dear friend,” repeated Mr. Pecksniff ; “but Providence, perhaps I may be permitted to say a special Providence, has blessed my endeavors, and I could guarantee to make the sacrifice.”

A question of philosophy arises here, whether Mr. Pecksniff had or had not good reason to say that he was specially patronized and encouraged in his undertakings. All his life long he had been walking up and down the narrow ways and by-places, with a hook in one hand and a crook in the other, scraping all sorts of valuable odds and ends into his pouch. Now, there being a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow, it follows (so Mr. Pecksniff would have reasoned) that there must also be a special Providence in the alighting of the stone, or stick, or other substance which is aimed at the sparrow. And Mr. Pecksniff's hook or crook having invariably knocked the sparrow on the head and brought him down, that gentleman may have been led to consider himself as specially licensed to bag sparrows, and as being specially seized and possessed of all the birds he had got together. That many undertakings, national as well as individual—but especially the former—are held to be specially brought to a glorious and successful issue, which never could be so regarded on any other process of reasoning, must be clear to all men. Therefore the precedents would seem to show that Mr. Pecksniff had good argument for what he said, and might be permitted to say it, and did not say it presumptuously, vainly, arrogantly, but in a spirit of high faith and great wisdom, meriting all praise.

“**I** NEVER see sich a man. He wouldn't have been washed, if he'd had his own way.”

“She put the soap in my mouth,” said the unfortunate patient, feebly.

“Couldn't you keep it shut, then?” retorted Mrs. Prig. “Who do you think's to wash one feater, and miss another, and wear one's eyes out with all manner of fine work of that description, for half-a-crown a day! If you wants to be tittivated, you must pay accordin'.”

“Oh dear me!” cried the patient; “oh dear, dear!”

“There!” said Mrs. Prig, “that's the way he's been a-con-

ducting of himself, Sarah, ever since I got him out of bed, if you'll believe it."

"Instead of being grateful," Mrs. Gamp observed, "for all our little ways. Oh, fie for shame, sir, fie for shame!"

Here Mrs. Prig seized the patient by the chin, and began to rasp his unhappy head with a hair-brush.

"I suppose you don't like that, neither!" she observed, stopping to look at him.

It was just possible that he didn't, for the brush was a specimen of the hardest kind of instrument producible by modern art, and his very eyelids were red with the friction. Mrs. Prig was gratified to observe the correctness of her supposition, and said triumphantly, "She know'd as much."

When his hair was smoothed down comfortably into his eyes, Mrs. Prig and Mrs. Gamp put on his neckerchief, adjusting his shirt-collar with great nicety, so that the starched points should also invade those organs, and afflict them with an artificial ophthalmia. His waistcoat and coat were next arranged, and as every button was wrenched into a wrong button-hole, and the order of his boots was reversed, he presented on the whole rather a melancholy appearance.

"I don't think it's right," said the poor weak invalid. "I feel as if I was in somebody else's clothes. I'm all on one side; and you've made one of my legs shorter than the other. There's a bottle in my pocket too. What do you make me sit upon a bottle for?"

"Deuce take the man!" cried Mrs. Gamp, drawing it forth. "If he ain't been and got my night-bottle here. I made a little cupboard of his coat when it hung behind the door, and quite forgot it, Betsey. You'll find an ingun or two, and a little tea and sugar in his t'other pocket, my dear, if you'll just be good enough to take 'em out."

IT may be observed, that having provided for his youngest daughter that choicest of blessings, a tender and indulgent husband; and having gratified the dearest wish of his pa-

rental heart by establishing her in life so happily, he renewed his youth, and spreading the plumage of his own bright conscience, felt himself equal to all kinds of flights. It is customary with fathers in stage-plays, after giving their daughters to the men of their hearts, to congratulate themselves on having no other business on their hands but to die immediately, though it is rarely found that they are in a hurry to do it. Mr. Pecksniff, being a father of a more sage and practical class, appeared to think that his immediate business was to live; and having deprived himself of one comfort, to surround himself with others.

BUT when he walked into the parlor where the old man was engaged as Jane had said, with pen and ink and paper on a table close at hand (for Mr. Pecksniff was always very particular to have him well supplied with writing materials), he became less cheerful. He was not angry, he was not vindictive, he was not cross, he was not moody, but he was grieved; he was sorely grieved. As he sat down by the old man's side, two tears, not tears like those with which recording angels blot their entries out, but drops so precious that they use them for their ink, stole down his meritorious cheeks.

MANY and many a pleasant stroll they had among the poultry markets, where ducks and fowls, with necks unnaturally long, lay stretched out in pairs, ready for cooking; where there were speckled eggs in mossy baskets, white country sausages beyond impeachment by surviving cat or dog, or horse or donkey, new cheeses to any wild extent, live birds in coops and cages, looking much too big to be natural, in consequence of those receptacles being much too little; rabbits, alive and dead innumerable. Many a pleasant stroll they had among the cool, refreshing, silvery fish-stalls, with a kind of moonlight effect about their stock-in-trade, excepting always for the ruddy lobsters.

“OH drat you!” said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella at it, “you’re a nice spluttering nisy monster for a delicate young creetur to go and be a passenger by; ain’t you! *You* never do no harm in that way, do you? With your hammering, and roaring, and hissing, and lamp-iling, you brute! Them Confugion steamers,” said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her umbrella again, “has done more to throw us out of our reg’lar work and bring ewents on at times when nobody counted on ’em (especially them screeching railroad ones), than all the other frights that ever was took. I have heerd of one young man, a guard upon a railway, only three years opened—well does Mrs. Harris know him, which indeed he is her own relation by her sister’s marriage with a master sawyer—as is godfather at this present time to six-and-twenty blessed little strangers, equally unexpected, and all on ’um named after the Ingains as was the cause. Ugh!” said Mrs. Gamp, resuming her apostrophe, “one might easy know you was a man’s invention, from your disregardlessness of the weakness of our natur, so one might, you brute!”

THOUGH lovers are remarkable for leaving a great deal unsaid on all occasions, and very properly desiring to come back and say it, they are remarkable also for a wonderful power of condensation; and can, in one way or other, give utterance to more language—eloquent language—in any given short space of time, than all the six hundred and fifty-eight members in the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; who are strong lovers, no doubt, but of their country only, which makes all the difference; for in a passion of that kind (which is not always returned), it is the custom to use as many words as possible, and express nothing whatever.

FROM LITTLE DORRIT.

FLORA, always tall, had grown to be very broad too, and short of breath ; but that was not much. Flora, whom he had left a lily, had become a peony ; but that was not much. Flora, who had seemed enchanting in all she said and thought, was diffuse and silly. That was much. Flora, who had been spoiled and artless long ago, was determined to be spoiled and artless now. That was a fatal blow.

This is Flora !

“I am sure,” giggled Flora, tossing her head with a caricature of her girlish manner, such as a mummer might have presented at her own funeral, if she had lived and died in classical antiquity, “I am ashamed to see Mr. Clennam, I am a mere fright, I know he’ll find me fearfully changed, I am actually an old woman, it’s shocking to be so found out, it’s really shocking !”

He assured her that she was just what he had expected, and that time had not stood still with himself.

“Oh ! But with a gentleman it’s so different, and really you look so amazingly well that you have no right to say anything of the kind, while, as to me, you know—oh !” cried Flora with a little scream, “I am dreadful !”

The Patriarch, apparently not yet understanding his own part in the drama under representation, glowed with vacant serenity.

“But if we talk of not having changed,” said Flora, who, whatever she said, never once came to a full stop, “look at papa, is not papa precisely what he was when you went away, isn’t it cruel and unnatural of papa to be such a reproach to his own child, if we go on in this way much longer people who don’t know us will begin to suppose that I am papa’s mamma !”

That must be a long time hence, Arthur considered.

“Oh, Mr. Clennam, you insincerest of creatures,” said Flora, “I perceive already you have not lost your old way of paying

compliments, your old way when you used to pretend to be so sentimentally struck you know—at least I don't mean that, I—oh I don't know what I mean!" Here Flora tittered confusedly, and gave him one of her old glances.

The Patriarch, as if he now began to perceive that his part in the piece was to get off the stage as soon as might be, rose, and went to the door by which Pancks had worked out hailing that Tug by name. He received an answer from some little Dock beyond, and was towed out of sight directly.

"You mustn't think of going yet," said Flora—Arthur had looked at his hat, being in a ludicrous dismay, and not knowing what to do; "you could never be so unkind as to think of going, Arthur—I mean Mr. Arthur—or I suppose Mr. Clennam would be far more proper—but I am sure I don't know what I am saying—without a word about the dear old days gone forever, however when I come to think of it I dare say it would be much better not to speak of them and it's highly probable that you have some much more agreeable engagement and pray let Me be the last person in the world to interfere with it though there *was* a time, but I am running into nonsense again."

Was it possible that Flora could have been such a chatterer, in the days she referred to? Could there have been anything like her present disjointed volubility, in the fascinations that had captivated him?

"Indeed I have little doubt," said Flora, running on with astonishing speed, and pointing her conversation with nothing but commas, and very few of them, "that you are married to some Chinese lady, being in China so long and being in business and naturally desirous to settle and extend your connection nothing was more likely than that you should propose to a Chinese lady and nothing was more natural I am sure than that the Chinese lady should accept you and think herself very well off too, I only hope she's not a Pagodian dissenter."

"I am not," returned Arthur, smiling in spite of himself, "married to any lady, Flora."

“Oh good gracious me I hope you never kept yourself a bachelor so long on my account!” tittered Flora; “but of course you never did why should you, pray don’t answer, I don’t know where I’m running to, oh do tell me something about the Chinese ladies whether their eyes are really so long and narrow always putting me in mind of mother-of-pearl fish at cards and do they really wear tails down their backs and plaited too or is it only the men, and when they pull their hair so very tight off their foreheads don’t they hurt themselves, and why do they stick little bells all over their bridges and temples and hats and things or don’t they really do it?” Flora gave him another of her old glances. Instantly she went on again, as if he had spoken in reply for some time.

“**W**HAT I was going to tell you, sir,” said Little Dorrit, “is, that my brother is at large.”

Arthur was rejoiced to hear it, and hoped he would do well.

“And what I was going to tell you, sir,” said Little Dorrit, trembling in all her little figure and in her voice, “is, that I am not to know whose generosity released him—am never to ask, and am never to be told, and am never to thank that gentleman with all my grateful heart!”

He would probably need no thanks, Clennam said. Very likely he would be thankful himself (and with reason), that he had had the means and chance of doing a little service to her, who well deserved a great one.

“And what I was going to say, sir, is,” said Little Dorrit trembling more and more, “that if I knew him, and I might, I would tell him that he can never, never know how I feel his goodness, and how my good father would feel it. And what I was going to say, sir, is, that if I knew him, and I might—but I don’t know him and I must not—I know that!—I would tell him that I shall never any more lie down to sleep, without having prayed to Heaven to bless him and reward him. And if I knew him, and I might, I would go down on my knees to him, and take his hand and kiss it, and ask him not to draw it

away, but to leave it—O to leave it for a moment—and let my thankful tears fall on it, for I have no other thanks to give him !”

Little Dorrit had put his hand to her lips, and would have kneeled to him, but he gently prevented her, and replaced her in her chair. Her eyes, and the tones of her voice, had thanked him far better than she thought.

DEAR Mr. Clennam, I have written a great deal about myself, but I must write a little more still, or what I wanted most of all to say in this weak letter would be left out of it. In all these foolish thoughts of mine, which I have been so hardy as to confess to you because I know you will understand me if anybody can, and will make more allowance for me than anybody else would if you cannot—in all these thoughts there is one thought scarcely ever—never—out of my memory, and that is that I hope you sometimes, in a quiet moment, have a thought for me. I must tell you that as to this, I have felt, ever since I have been away, an anxiety which I am very very anxious to relieve. I have been afraid that you may think of me in a new light, or a new character. Don't do that, I could not bear that—it would make me more unhappy than you can suppose. It would break my heart to believe that you thought of me in any way that would make me stranger to you than I was when you were so good to me. What I have to pray and entreat of you is, that you will never think of me as the daughter of a rich person ; that you will never think of me as dressing any better, or living any better, than when you first knew me. That you will remember me only as the little shabby girl you protected with so much tenderness, from whose threadbare dress you have kept away the rain, and whose wet feet you have dried at your fire. That you will think of me (when you think of me at all), and of my true affection and devoted gratitude, always without change, as of

Your poor child,

LITTLE DORRIT.

“**A**MY,” said Fanny to her, one night when they were alone, after a day so tiring that Little Dorrit was quite worn out, though Fanny would have taken another dip into society with the greatest pleasure in life, “I am going to put something into your little head. You won’t guess what it is, I suspect.”

“I don’t think that’s likely, dear,” said Little Dorrit.

“Come, I’ll give you a clue, child,” said Fanny. “Mrs. General.”

Prunes and Prism, in a thousand combinations, having been wearily in the ascendant all day—everything having been surface and varnish, and show without substance—Little Dorrit looked as if she had hoped that Mrs. General was safely tucked up in bed for some hours.

“*Now* can you guess, Amy?” said Fanny.

“No, dear. Unless I have done anything,” said Little Dorrit, rather alarmed, and meaning anything calculated to crack varnish and ruffled surface.

Fanny was so very much amused by the misgiving, that she took up her favorite fan (being then seated at her dressing-table with her armory of cruel instruments about her, most of them reeking from the heart of Sparkler), and tapped her sister frequently on the nose with it, laughing all the time.

“Oh, our Amy, our Amy!” said Fanny. “What a timid little goose our Amy is! But this is nothing to laugh at. On the contrary, I am very cross, my dear.”

“As it is not with me, Fanny, I don’t mind,” returned her sister, smiling.

“Ah! But I do mind,” said Fanny, “and so will you, Pet, when I enlighten you. Amy, has it never struck you that somebody is monstrously polite to Mrs. General?”

“Everybody is polite to Mrs. General,” said Little Dorrit. “Because—”

“Because she freezes them into it?” interrupted Fanny. “I don’t mean that; quite different from that. Come! Has it

never struck you, Amy, that pa is monstrously polite to Mrs. General."

Amy, murmuring "No," looked quite confounded.

"No; I dare say not. But he is," said Fanny; "he is, Amy. And remember my words. Mrs. General has designs on pa!"

"Dear Fanny, do you think it possible that Mrs. General has designs on any one?"

"Do I think it possible?" retorted Fanny. "My love, I know it, I tell you she has designs on pa. And more than that, I tell you pa considers her such a wonder, such a paragon of accomplishment, and such an acquisition to our family, that he is ready to get himself into a state of perfect infatuation with her at any moment. And that opens a pretty picture of things, I hope! Think of me with Mrs. General for a mamma!"

Little Dorrit did not reply, "Think of me with Mrs. General for a mamma;" but she looked anxious, and seriously inquired what had led Fanny to these conclusions.

"Lard, my darling," said Fanny, tartly. "You might as well ask me how I know when a man is struck with myself! But of course I do know. It happens pretty often; but I always know it. I know this, in much the same way, I suppose. At all events, I know it."

"You never heard papa say anything?" repeated Fanny. "My dearest, darling child, what necessity has he had, yet awhile, to say anything?"

"And you have never heard Mrs. General say anything?"

"My goodness me, Amy," returned Fanny, "is she the sort of woman to say anything? Isn't it perfectly plain and clear that she has nothing to do, at present, but to hold herself upright, keep her aggravating gloves on, and go sweeping about? Say anything! If she had the ace of trumps in her hand, at whist, she wouldn't say anything, child. It would come out when she played it."

"At least, you may be mistaken, Fanny. Now may you not?"

"O yes, I *may* be," said Fanny, "but I am not. However,

I am glad you can contemplate such an escape, my dear, and I am glad that you can take this for the present with sufficient coolness to think of such a chance. It makes me hope that you may be able to bear the connection. I should not be able to bear it, and I should not try. I'd marry young Sparkler first."

"Oh, you would never marry him, Fanny, under any circumstances."

"Upon my word, my dear," rejoined that young lady, with exceeding indifference, "I wouldn't positively answer even for that. There's no knowing what might happen. Especially as I should have many opportunities, afterwards, of treating that woman, his mother, in her own style. Which I most decidedly should not be slow to avail myself of, Amy."

"**I** BEG Mr. Dorrit to offer a thousand apologies and indeed they would be far too few for such an intrusion which I know must appear extremely bold in a lady and alone too, but I thought it best upon the whole however difficult and even apparently improper though Mr. F.'s aunt would have willingly accompanied me and as a character of great force and spirit would probably have struck one possessed of such a knowledge of life as no doubt with so many changes must have been acquired, for Mr. F. himself said frequently that although well educated in the neighborhood of Blackheath at as high as eighty guineas which is a good deal for parents and the plate kept back too on going away, but that is more a meanness than its value that he had learned more in his first year as a commercial traveller with a large commission on the sale of an article that nobody would hear of, much less buy, which preceded the wine trade a long time than in the whole six years in that academy conducted by a college Bachelor, though why a Bachelor more clever than a married man I do not see and never did ; but pray excuse me that is not the point."

Mr. Dorrit stood rooted to the carpet, a statue of mystification.

AT the close of the evening when she rose to retire, Mr. Dorrit took her by the hand, as if he were going to lead her out into the Piazza of the People to walk a minuet by moonlight, and with great solemnity conducted her to the room door, where he raised her knuckles to his lips. Having parted from her with what may be conjectured to have been a rather bony kiss, of a cosmetic flavor, he gave his daughter his blessing, graciously. And having thus hinted that there was something remarkable in the wind, he again went to bed.

THE report that the great man was dead, got about with astonishing rapidity. At first, he was dead of all the diseases that ever were known, and of several bran-new maladies invented with the speed of Light to meet the demand of the occasion. He had concealed a dropsy from infancy, he had inherited a large estate of water on the chest from his grandfather, he had had an operation performed upon him every morning of his life for eighteen years, he had been subject to the explosion of important veins in his body after the manner of fireworks, he had had something the matter with his lungs, he had had something the matter with his heart, he had had something the matter with his brain. Five hundred people who sat down to breakfast entirely uninformed on the whole subject, believed before they had done breakfast, that they privately and personally knew Physician to have said to Mr. Merdle, "You must expect to go out, some day, like the snuff of a candle," and that they knew Mr. Merdle to have said to Physician, "A man can die but once." By about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, something the matter with the brain became the favorite theory against the field; and by twelve the something had been distinctly ascertained to be "Pressure."

FROM OLIVER TWIST.

“**I** HAVE taken the measure of the two women that died last night, Mr. Bumble,” said the undertaker.

“You’ll make your fortune, Mr. Sowerberry,” said the beadle, as he thrust his thumb and forefinger into the proffered snuff-box of the undertaker, which was an ingenious little model of a patent coffin. “I say you’ll make your fortune, Mr. Sowerberry,” repeated Mr. Bumble, tapping the undertaker on the shoulder, in a friendly manner, with his cane.

“Think so?” said the undertaker in a tone which half admitted and half disputed the probability of the event. “The prices allowed by the board are very small, Mr. Bumble.”

“So are the coffins,” replied the beadle, with precisely as near an approach to a laugh as a great official ought to indulge in.

Mr. Sowerberry was much tickled at this, as of course he ought to be, and laughed a long time without cessation. “Well, well, Mr. Bumble,” he said at length, “there’s no denying that, since the new system of feeding has come in, the coffins are something narrower and more shallow than they used to be; but we must have some profit, Mr. Bumble. Well-seasoned timber is an expensive article, sir; and all the iron handles come by canal, from Birmingham.”

“Well, well,” said Mr. Bumble, “every trade has its drawbacks. A fair profit is, of course, allowable.”

“Of course, of course,” replied the undertaker; “and if I don’t get a profit upon this or that particular article, why, I make it up in the long run, you see—he! he! he!”

“Just so,” said Mr. Bumble.

“Though I must say,” continued the undertaker, resuming the current of observations which the beadle had interrupted, —“though I must say, Mr. Bumble, that I have to contend against one very great disadvantage: which is, that all the stout people go off the quickest. The people who have been

better off, and have paid rates for many years, are the first to sink when they come into the house; and let me tell you, Mr. Bumble, that three or four inches over one's calculation makes a great hole in one's profits; especially when one has a family to provide for, sir."

OLIVER rose next morning, in better heart, and went about his usual early occupations, with more hope and pleasure than he had known for many days. The birds were once more hung out to sing, in their old places; and the sweetest wild-flowers that could be found were once more gathered to gladden Rose with their beauty. The melancholy which had seemed to the sad eyes of the anxious boy to hang, for days past, over every object, beautiful as all were, was dispelled by magic. The dew seemed to sparkle more brightly on the green leaves; the air to rustle among them with a sweeter music; and the sky itself to look more blue and bright. Such is the influence which the condition of our own thoughts exercises, even over the appearance of external objects. Men who look on nature and their fellow-men, and cry that all is dark and gloomy, are in the right; but the sombre colors are reflections from their own jaundiced eyes and hearts. The real hues are delicate, and need a clearer vision.

THE girl had taken a few restless turns to and fro—closely watched, meanwhile, by her hidden observer—when the heavy bell of St. Paul's tolled for the death of another day. Midnight had come upon the crowded city. The palace, the night-cellar, the jail, the mad-house; the chambers of birth and death, of health and sickness; the rigid face of the corpse, and the calm sleep of the child: midnight was upon them all.

THE conference was a long one. Oliver told them all his simple history, and was often compelled to stop, by pain and want of strength. It was a solemn thing, to hear, in the

darkened room, the feeble voice of the sick child recounting a weary catalogue of evils and calamities which hard men had brought upon him. Oh ! if, when we oppress and grind our fellow-creatures, we bestowed but one thought on the dark evidences of human error, which, like dense and heavy clouds, are rising, slowly, it is true, but not less surely, to Heaven, to pour their after-vengeance on our heads ; if we heard but one instant, in imagination, the deep testimony of dead men's voices, which no power can stifle, and no pride shut out, where would be the injury and injustice, the suffering, misery, cruelty, and wrong, that each day's life brings with it ?

Oliver's pillow was smoothed by gentle hands that night, and loveliness and virtue watched him as he slept. He felt calm and happy, and could have died without a murmur.

THE younger lady was in the lovely bloom and spring-time of womanhood ; at that age, when, if ever angels be for God's good purposes enthroned in mortal forms, they may be, without impiety, supposed to abide in such as hers.

She was not past seventeen. Cast in so slight and exquisite a mould, so mild and gentle, so pure and beautiful, that earth seemed not her element, nor its rough creatures her fit companions. The very intelligence that shone in her deep-blue eye, and was stamped upon her noble head, seemed scarcely of her age or of the world ; and yet the changing expression of sweetness and good-humor, the thousand lights that played about the face, and left no shadow there ; above all, the smile, the cheerful, happy smile, were made for Home, and fireside peace and happiness.

ALAS ! how few of Nature's faces are left to gladden us with their beauty ! The cares, and sorrows, and hungerings of the world, change them as they change hearts ; and it is only when those passions sleep, and have lost their hold for-

ever, that the troubled clouds pass off, and leave Heaven's surface clear. It is a common thing for the countenances of the dead, even in that fixed and rigid state, to subside into the long-forgotten expression of sleeping infancy, and settle into the very look of early life ; so calm, so peaceful do they grow again, that those who knew them in their happy childhood kneel by the coffin's side in awe, and see the Angel even upon earth.

“**M**Y dear child,” said the old gentleman, moved by the warmth of Oliver's sudden appeal ; “you need not be afraid of my deserting you, unless you give me cause.”

“I never, never will, sir,” interposed Oliver.

“I hope not,” rejoined the old gentleman. “I do not think you ever will ; I have been deceived before in the objects whom I have endeavored to benefit ; but I feel strongly disposed to trust you, nevertheless ; and I am more interested in your behalf than I can well account for, even to myself. The persons on whom I have bestowed my dearest love lie deep in their graves ; but, although the happiness and delight of my life lie buried there too, I have not made a coffin of my heart, and sealed it up forever, on my best affections. Deep affliction has but strengthened and refined them.

EVERYBODY knows the story of another experimental philosopher, who had a great theory about a horse being able to live without eating, and who demonstrated it so well, that he got his own horse down to a straw a day, and would most unquestionably have rendered him a very spirited and rampacious animal on nothing at all, if he had not died, just four-and-twenty hours before he was to have had his first comfortable bait of air. Unfortunately for the experimental philosophy of the female to whose protecting care Oliver Twist was delivered over, a similar result usually attended the

operation of *her* system ; for at the very moment when a child had contrived to exist upon the smallest possible portion of the weakest possible food, it did perversely happen in eight and a half cases out of ten, either that it sickened from want and cold, or fell into the fire from neglect, or got half smothered by accident ; in any one of which cases the miserable little being was usually summoned into another world, and there gathered to the fathers it had never known in this.

FROM BLEAK HOUSE.

“**I**T’S only you, the generous creatures, whom I envy,” said Mr. Skimpole, addressing us, his new friends, in an impersonal manner. “I envy you your power of doing what you do. It is what I should revel in, myself. I don’t feel any vulgar gratitude to you. I almost feel as if *you* ought to be grateful to *me*, for giving you the opportunity of enjoying the luxury of generosity. I know you like it. For anything I can tell, I may have come into the world expressly for the purpose of increasing your stock of happiness. I may have been born to be a benefactor to you, by sometimes giving you an opportunity of assisting me in my little perplexities. Why should I regret my incapacity for details and worldly affairs, when it leads to such pleasant consequences? I don’t regret it, therefore.”

MR. SKIMPOLE was as agreeable at breakfast as he had been overnight. There was honey on the table, and it led him into a discourse about Bees. He had no objection to honey, he said (and I should think he had not, for he seemed to like it), but he protested against the overweening assumptions of Bees. He didn’t at all see why the busy Bee should

be proposed as a model to him ; he supposed the Bee liked to make honey, or he wouldn't do it—nobody asked him. It was not necessary for the Bee to make such a merit of his tastes. If every confectioner went buzzing about the world, banging against everything that came in his way, and egotistically calling upon everybody to take notice that he was going to his work, and must not be interrupted, the world would be quite an unsupportable place. Then, after all, it was a ridiculous position to be smoked out of your fortune with brimstone, as soon as you had made it. You would have a very mean opinion of a Manchester man, if he spun cotton for no other purpose. He must say he thought a Drone the embodiment of a pleasanter and wiser idea. The Drone said unaffectedly, "You will excuse me, I really cannot attend to the shop ! I find myself in a world in which there is so much to see, and so short a time to see it in, that I must take the liberty of looking about me, and begging to be provided for by somebody who doesn't want to look about him." This appeared to Mr. Skimpole to be the Drone philosophy, and he thought it a very good philosophy—always supposing the Drone to be willing to be on good terms with the Bee ; which, so far as he knew, the easy fellow always was, if the consequential creature would only let him, and not be so conceited about his honey !

He pursued this fancy, with the lightest foot, over a variety of ground, and made us all merry ; though again he seemed to have as serious a meaning in what he said as he was capable of having. I left them still listening to him, when I withdrew to attend to my new duties.

THE number of little acts of thoughtless expenditure which Richard justified by the recovery of his ten pounds, and the number of times he talked to me as if he had saved or realized that amount, would form a sum in simple addition.

"My prudent Mother Hubbard, why not ?" he said to me, when he wanted, without the least consideration, to bestow

five pounds on the brick-maker. "I made ten pounds, clear, out of Coavinses' business."

"How was that?" said I.

"Why, I got rid of ten pounds which I was quite content to get rid of, and never expected to see any more. You don't deny that?"

"No," said I.

"Very well! then I came into possession of ten pounds—"

"The same ten pounds," I hinted.

"That has nothing to do with it!" returned Richard. "I have got ten pounds more than I expected to have, and consequently I can afford to spend it without being particular."

In exactly the same way, when he was persuaded out of the sacrifice of these five pounds, by being convinced that it would do no good, he carried that sum to his credit, and drew upon it.

"Let me see!" he would say. "I saved five pounds out of the brick-maker's affair; so, if I have a good rattle to London and back in a post-chaise, and put that down at four pounds, I shall have saved one. And it's a very good thing to save one, let me tell you; a penny saved is a penny got."

THEN there is my Lord Boodle, of considerable reputation with his party, who has known what office is, and who tells Sir Leicester Dedlock with much gravity, after dinner, that he really does not see to what the present age is tending. A debate is not what a debate used to be; the House is not what the House used to be; even a Cabinet is not what it formerly was. He perceives, with astonishment, that supposing the present Government to be overthrown, the limited choice of the Crown, in the formation of a new ministry, would lie between Lord Coodle and Sir Thomas Doodle—supposing it to be impossible for the Duke of Foodle to act with Goodle, which may be assumed to be the case in consequence of the breach arising out of that affair with Hoodle.

Then, giving the Home Department, and the Leadership of the House of Commons to Joodle, the Exchequer to Koodle, the Colonies to Loodle, and the Foreign Office to Moodle, what are you to do with Noodle? You can't offer him the Presidency of the Council; that is reserved for Poodle. You can't put him in the Woods and Forests; that is hardly good enough for Quoodle. What follows? That the country is shipwrecked, lost, and gone to pieces (as is made manifest to the patriotism of Sir Leicester Dedlock), because you can't provide for Noodle!

On the other hand, the Right Honorable William Buffy, M.P., contends across the table with some one else, that the shipwreck of the country—about which there is no doubt; it is only the manner of it that is in question—is attributable to Cuffy. If you had done with Cuffy what you ought to have done when he first came into Parliament, and had prevented him from going over to Duffy, you would have got him into alliance with Fuffy, you would have had with you the weight attaching as a smart debater to Guffy, you would have brought to bear upon the elections the wealth of Huffy, you would have got in for three counties Juffy, Kuffy, and Luffy, and you would have strengthened your administration by the official knowledge and the business habits of Muffy. All this, instead of being as you now are, dependent on the mere caprice of Puffy!

MR. GUPPY suspects everybody who enters on the occupation of a stool in Kenge and Carboy's office, of entertaining, as a matter of course, sinister designs upon him. He is clear that every such person wants to depose him. If he be ever asked how, why, when, or wherefore, he shuts up one eye and shakes his head. On the strength of these profound views, he, in the most ingenious manner, takes infinite pains to counterplot, when there is no plot; and plays the deepest games of chess without any adversary.

HE was charmed to see me ; said he had been shedding delicious tears of joy and sympathy, at intervals, for six weeks, on my account ; had never been so happy as in hearing of my progress ; began to understand the mixture of good and evil in the world now ; felt that he appreciated health the more, when somebody else was ill ; didn't know but what it might be in the scheme of things that 'A should squint to make B happier in looking straight ; or that C should carry a wooden leg, to make D better satisfied with his flesh and blood in a silk stocking.

WE made a pleasant journey down into Lincolnshire by the coach, and had an entertaining companion in Mr. Skimpole. His furniture had been all cleared off, it appeared, by the person who took possession of it on his blue-eyed daughter's birthday ; but he seemed quite relieved to think that it was gone. Chairs and tables, he said, were wearisome objects ; they were monotonous ideas, they had no variety of expression, they looked you out of countenance, and you looked them out of countenance. How pleasant, then, to be bound to no particular chairs and tables, but to sport like a butterfly among all the furniture on hire, and to flit from rose-wood to mahogany, and from mahogany to walnut, and from this shape to that, as the humor took one !

"The oddity of the thing is," said Mr. Skimpole, with a quickened sense of the ludicrous, "that my chairs and tables were not paid for, and yet my landlord walks off with them as composedly as possible. Now, that seems droll ! There is something grotesque in it. The chair and table merchant never engaged to pay my landlord my rent. Why should my landlord quarrel with *him* ? If I have a pimple on my nose which is disagreeable to my landlord's peculiar ideas of beauty, my landlord has no business to scratch my chair and table merchant's nose, which has no pimple on it. His reasoning seems defective !"

“Well,” said my guardian, good-humoredly, “it’s pretty clear that whoever became security for those chairs and tables will have to pay for them.”

“Exactly!” returned Mr. Skimpole. “That’s the crowning point of unreason in the business! I said to my landlord, ‘My good man, you are not aware that my excellent friend Jarndyce will have to pay for those things that you are sweeping off in that indelicate manner. Have you no consideration for *his* property?’ He hadn’t the least.”

“And refused all proposals,” said my guardian.

“Refused all proposals,” returned Mr. Skimpole. “I made him business proposals. I had him into my room. I said, ‘You are a man of business, I believe?’ He replied, ‘I am.’ ‘Very well,’ said I, ‘now let us be business-like. Here is an inkstand, here are pens and paper, here are wafers. What do you want? I have occupied your house for a considerable period, I believe to our mutual satisfaction until this unpleasant misunderstanding arose; let us be at once friendly and business-like. What do you want?’ In reply to this he made use of the figurative expression—which has something Eastern about it—that he had never seen the color of my money. ‘My amiable friend,’ said I, ‘I never have any money. I never know anything about money.’ ‘Well, sir,’ said he, ‘what do you offer if I give you time?’ ‘My good fellow,’ said I, ‘I have no idea of time; but, you say you are a man of business, and whatever you can suggest to be done in a business-like way with pen, and ink, and paper—and wafers—I am ready to do. Don’t pay yourself at another man’s expense (which is foolish), but be business-like!’ However, he wouldn’t be, and there was an end of it.”

“**H**OW old *are* you, Phil?” asks the trooper, pausing as he conveys his smoking saucer to his lips.

“I’m something with a eight in it,” says Phil. “It can’t be eighty. Nor yet eighteen. It’s betwixt ’em, somewheres.”

Mr. George, slowly putting down his saucer without tasting its contents, is laughingly beginning, "Why, what the deuce, Phil,"—when he stops, seeing that Phil is counting on his dirty fingers.

"I was just eight," says Phil, "agreeable to the parish calculation, when I went with the tinker. I was sent on a errand, and I see him a-sittin' under a old buildin' with a fire all to himself werry comfortable, and he says, 'Would you like to come along a me, my man?' I says 'Yes,' and him and me and the fire goes home to Clerkenwell together. That was April Fool Day. I was able to count up to ten; and when April Fool Day came round again, I says to myself, 'Now, old chap, you're one and a eight in it.' April Fool day after that, I says, 'Now, old chap, you're two and a eight in it.' In course of time, I come to ten and a eight in it; two tens and a eight in it. When it got so high, it got the upper hand of me; but this is how I always know there's a eight in it."

A GREAT crowd assembles in Lincoln's Inn Fields on the day of the funeral. Sir Leicester Dedlock attends the ceremony in person; strictly speaking, there are only three other human followers, that is to say, Lord Doodle, William Buffy, and the debilitated cousin (thrown in as a make-weight), but the amount of inconsolable carriages is immense. The Peerage contributes more four-wheeled affliction than has ever been seen in that neighborhood. Such is the assemblage of armorial bearings on coach-panels, that the Herald's College might be supposed to have lost its father and mother at a blow. The Duke of Foodle sends a splendid pile of dust and ashes, with silver-wheel boxes, patent axles, all the last improvements, and three bereaved worms, six feet high, holding on behind, in a bunch of woe. All the state coachmen in London seem plunged into mourning; and if that dead old man of the rusty garb be not beyond a taste in horseflesh (which appears impossible), it must be highly gratified this day.

WHEN we came home we found that a young man had called three times in the course of that one day, to see me : and that, having been told, on the occasion of his third call, that I was not expected to return before ten o'clock at night, he had left word, "that he would call about then." He had left his card three times. MR. GUPPY.

As I naturally speculated on the object of these visits, and as I always associated something ludicrous with the visitor, it fell out that in laughing about Mr. Guppy I told my guardian of his old proposal, and his subsequent retractation. "After that," said my guardian, "we will certainly receive this hero." So, instructions were given that Mr. Guppy should be shown in, when he came again ; and they were scarcely given when he did come again.

He was embarrassed when he found my guardian with me, but recovered himself, and said, "How de do, sir?"

"How do you do, sir?" returned my guardian.

"Thank you, sir, I am tolerable," returned Mr. Guppy. "Will you allow me to introduce my mother, Mrs. Guppy of the Old Street Road, and my particular friend, Mr. Weevle. That is to say, my friend has gone by the name of Weevle, but his name is really and truly Jobling."

My guardian begged them to be seated, and they all sat down.

"Tony," said Mr. Guppy to his friend, after an awkward silence. "Will you open the case?"

"Do it yourself," returned the friend, rather tartly.

"Well, Mr. Jarndyce, sir," Mr. Guppy, after a moment's consideration, began ; to the great diversion of his mother, which she displayed by nudging Mr. Jobling with her elbow, and winking at me in a most remarkable manner ; "I had an idea that I should see Miss Summerson by herself, and was not quite prepared for your esteemed presence. But Miss Summerson has mentioned to you, perhaps, that something has passed between us on former occasions?"

"Miss Summerson," returned my guardian smiling, "has made a communication to that effect to me."

"That," said Mr. Guppy, "makes matters easier. Sir, I have come out of my articles at Kenge and Carboy's, and I believe with satisfaction to all parties. I am now admitted (after undergoing an examination that's enough to badger a man blue, touching a pack of nonsense that he don't want to know) on the roll of attorneys, and have taken out my certificate, if it would be any satisfaction to you to see it."

"Thank you, Mr. Guppy," returned my guardian. "I am quite willing—I believe I use a legal phrase—to admit the certificate."

Mr. Guppy therefore desisted from taking something out of his pocket, and proceeded without it.

"I have no capital myself, but my mother has a little property which takes the form of an annuity;" here Mr. Guppy's mother rolled her head as if she never could sufficiently enjoy the observation, and put her handkerchief to her mouth, and again winked at me; "and a few pounds for expenses out of pocket in conducting business, will never be wanting, free of interest, which is an advantage, you know," said Mr. Guppy, feelingly.

"Certainly an advantage," returned my guardian.

"I *have* some connection," pursued Mr. Guppy, "and it lays in the direction of Walcot Square, Lambeth. I have therefore taken a ouse in that locality, which, in the opinion of my friends, is a hellow bargain (taxes ridiculous, and use of fixtures included in the rent) and intend setting up professionally for myself there, forthwith."

Here Mr. Guppy's mother fell into an extraordinary passion of rolling her head, and smiling waggishly at anybody who would look at her.

"It's a six-roomer, exclusive of kitchen," said Mr. Guppy, "and in the opinion of my friends, a commodious tenement. When I mention my friends, I refer principally to my friend

Jobling, who I believe has known me," Mr. Guppy looked at him with a sentimental air, "from boyhood's hour?"

Mr. Jobling confirmed this with a sliding movement of his legs.

"My friend Jobling will render me his assistance in 'the capacity of clerk, and will live in the ouse,'" said Mr. Guppy. "My mother will likewise live in the ouse, when her present quarter in the Old Street Road shall have ceased and expired; and consequently there will be no want of society. My friend Jobling is naturally aristocratic by taste; and besides being acquainted with the movements of the upper circles, fully backs me in the intentions I am now developing."

Mr. Jobling said "certainly," and withdrew a little from the elbow of Mr. Guppy's mother.

"Now, I have no occasion to mention to you, sir, you being in the confidence of Miss Summerson," said Mr. Guppy, "(mother, I wish you'd be so good as to keep still), that Miss Summerson's image was formerly imprinted on my art, and that I made her a proposal of marriage."

"That I have heard," returned my guardian.

"Circumstances," pursued Mr. Guppy, "over which I had no control but quite the contrary, weakened the impression of that image for a time. At which time Miss Summerson's conduct was highly genteel; I may even add, magnanimous."

My guardian patted me on the shoulder, and seemed much amused.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Guppy, "I have got into that state of mind myself, that I wish for a reciprocity of magnanimous behavior. I wish to prove to Miss Summerson that I can rise to a heighth, of which perhaps she hardly thought me capable. I find that the image which I did suppose had been eradicated from my art, is *not* eradicated. Its influence over me is still tremenjous; and yielding to it I am willing to overlook the circumstances over which none of us have had any control, and to renew those proposals to Miss Summerson which I had the honor to make at a former period. I beg to lay the ouse in

Walcot Square, the business, and myself, before Miss Summer-son for her acceptance."

"Very magnanimous indeed, sir," observed my guardian.

"Well, sir," replied Mr. Guppy, with candor, "my wish is to *be* magnanimous. I do not consider that in making this offer to Miss Summerson I am by any means throwing myself away; neither is that the opinion of my friends. Still, there are circumstances which I submit may be taken into account as a set-off against any little drawbacks of mine, and so a fair and equitable balance arrived at."

"I take upon myself, sir," said my guardian laughing as he rang the bell, "to reply to your proposals on behalf of Miss Summerson. She is very sensible of your handsome intentions, and wishes you good-evening, and wishes you well."

"Oh!" said Mr. Guppy with a blank look. "Is that tantamount, sir, to acceptance, or rejection, or consideration?"

"To decided rejection, if you please?" returned my guardian.

Mr. Guppy looked incredulously at his friend, and at his mother who suddenly turned very angry, and at the floor, and at the ceiling.

"Indeed?" said he. "Then Jobling, if you was the friend you represent yourself, I should think you might hand my mother out of the gangway, instead of allowing her to remain where she ain't wanted."

But Mrs. Guppy positively refused to come out of the gangway. She wouldn't hear of it. "Why, get along with you," said she to my guardian, "what do you mean? Ain't my son good enough for you? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Get out with you!"

"My good lady!" returned my guardian, "it is hardly reasonable to ask me to get out of my own room."

"I don't care for that," said Mrs. Guppy. "Get out with you. If we ain't good enough for you, go and procure somebody that is good enough. Go along and find 'em."

I was quite unprepared for the rapid manner in which Mrs.

Guppy's power of jocularly merged into a power of taking the profoundest offence.

"Go along and find somebody that's good enough for you," repeated Mrs. Guppy. "Get out!" Nothing seemed to astonish Mr. Guppy's mother so much, and to make her so very indignant, as our not getting out. "Why don't you get out?" said Mrs. Guppy. "What are you stopping here for?"

"Mother," interposed her son, always getting before her, and pushing her back with one shoulder, as she sidled at my guardian, "*will* you hold your tongue?"

"No, William," she returned; "I won't! Not unless he gets out, I won't!"

However, Mr. Guppy and Mr. Jobling together closed on Mr. Guppy's mother (who began to be quite abusive), and took her, very much against her will, downstairs; her voice rising a stair higher every time her figure got a stair lower, and insisting that we should immediately go and find somebody who was good enough for us, and above all things that we should get out.

FROM OUR MUTUAL FRIEND.

"**N**OW, look here. I'm retired from business. Me and Mrs. Boffin—Henerietty Boffin—which her father's name was Henery, and her mother's name was Hetty, and so you get it—we live on a compittance, under the will of a diseased governor."

"Gentleman dead, sir?"

"Man alive, don't I tell you? A diseased governor? Now, it's too late for me to begin shovelling and sifting at alphabets and grammar-books. I'm getting to be a old bird, and I want to take it easy. But I want some reading—some fine bold reading, some splendid book in a gorging Lord Mayor's-Show of wollumes" (probably meaning gorgeous, but misled by as-

sociation of ideas); "as'll reach right down your pint of view, and take time to go by you. How can I get that reading, Wegg? By," tapping him on the breast with the head of his stick, "paying a man truly qualified to do it, so much an hour (say twopence) to come and do it."

"Hem! Flattered, sir, I am sure," said Wegg, beginning to regard himself quite in a new light. "Hem! This is the offer you mentioned, sir?"

"Yes. Do you like it?"

"I am considering of it, Mr. Boffin."

"I don't," said Boffin, in a free-handed manner, "want to tie a literary man—with a wooden leg—down too tight. A halfpenny an hour shan't part us. The hours are your own to choose, after you've done for the day with your house here. I live over Maiden Lane way—out Holloway direction—and you've only got to go East-and-by-North when you've finished here, and you're there. Twopence-halfpenny an hour," said Boffin, taking a piece of chalk from his pocket and getting off the stool to work the sum on the top of it in his own way; "two long'uns and a short'un—twopence-halfpenny; two short'uns is a long'un and two two long'uns is four long'uns—making five long'uns; six nights a week at five long'uns a night," scoring them all down separately, "and you mount up to thirty long'uns. A round'un! Half-a-crown!"

Pointing to this result as a large and satisfactory one, Mr. Boffin smeared it out with his moistened glove, and sat down on the remains.

"Half-a-crown," said Wegg, meditating. "Yes. (It ain't much, sir.) Half-a-crown."

"Per week, you know."

"Per week. Yes. As to the amount of strain upon the intellect now. Was you thinking at all of poetry?" Mr. Wegg inquired, musing.

"Would it come dearer?" Mr. Boffin asked.

"It would come dearer," Mr. Wegg returned. "For when a person comes to grind off poetry night after night, it is but

right he should expect to be paid for its weakening effect on his mind."

"To tell you the truth, Wegg," said Boffin, "I wasn't thinking of poetry, except in so far as this:—If you was to happen now and then to feel yourself in the mind to tip me and Mrs. Boffin one of your ballads, why then we should drop into poetry."

"I follow you, sir," said Wegg. "But not being a regular musical professional, I should be loath to engage myself for that; and therefore when I dropped into poetry, I should ask to be considered so far, in the light of a friend."

At this, Mr. Boffin's eyes sparkled, and he shook Silas earnestly by the hand, protesting that it was more than he could have asked, and that he took it very kindly indeed."

"What do you think of the terms, Wegg?" Mr. Boffin then demanded, with unconcealed anxiety.

Silas, who had stimulated this anxiety by his hard reserve of manner, and who had begun to understand his man very well, replied with an air; as if he was saying something extraordinarily generous and great:

"Mr. Boffin, I never bargain."

"So I should have thought of you!" said Mr. Boffin admiringly.

"No, sir. I never did 'aggle and I never will 'aggle. Consequently I meet you at once, free and fair, with——Done, for double the money!"

Mr. Boffin seemed a little unprepared for this conclusion, but assented, with the remark, "You know better what it ought to be than I do, Wegg," and again shook hands with him upon it.

"Could you begin to-night, Wegg?" he then demanded.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Wegg, careful to leave all the eagerness to him. "I see no difficulty if you wish it. You are provided with the needful implement—a book, sir?"

"Bought him at a sale," said Mr. Boffin. "Eight wollumes. Red and gold. Purple ribbon in every wollume, to keep the place where you leave off. Do you know him?"

“The book’s name, sir?” inquired Silas.

“I thought you might have know’d him without it,” said Mr. Boffin, slightly disappointed. His name is Decline-And-Fall-Off-The-Rooshan-Empire.” (Mr. Boffin went over these stones slowly and with much caution.)

“Ay, indeed!” said Mr. Wegg, nodding his head with an air of friendly recognition.

“You know him, Wegg?”

“I haven’t been not to say right slap through him, very lately,” Mr. Wegg made answer, “having been otherways employed, Mr. Boffin. But know him? Old familiar declining and falling off the Rooshan! Rather, sir! Ever since I was not so high as your stick. Ever since my eldest brother left our cottage to enlist into the army. On which occasion, as the ballad that was made about it describes:

“Beside that cottage door, Mr. Boffin,
A girl was on her knees;
She held aloft a snowy scarf, sir,
Which (my eldest brother noticed) fluttered in the breeze.
She breathed a prayer for him, Mr. Boffin;
A prayer he could not hear.
And my eldest brother lean’d upon his sword, Mr. Boffin,
And wiped away a tear.”

Much impressed by this family circumstance, and also by the friendly disposition of Mr. Wegg, as exemplified in his so soon dropping into poetry, Mr. Boffin again shook hands with that ligneous sharper, and besought him to name his hour. Mr. Wegg named eight.

AND now, Mr. Wegg at length pushed away his plate and put on his spectacles, and Mr. Boffin lighted his pipe and looked with beaming eyes into the opening world before him, and Mrs. Boffin reclined in a fashionable manner on her sofa: as one who would be part of the audience if she found she could, and would go to sleep if she found she couldn’t.

"Hem!" began Wegg, "This, Mr. Boffin and Lady, is the first chapter of the first wollume of the Decline and Fall off—" here he looked hard at the book, and stopped.

"What's the matter, Wegg?"

"Why it comes into my mind, do you know sir," said Wegg, with an air of insinuating frankness (having first again looked hard at the book), "that you made a little mistake this morning, which I had meant to set you right in, only something put it out of my head. I think you said Rooshan Empire, sir?"

"It is Rooshan; ain't it, Wegg?"

"No, sir. Roman. Roman."

"What's the difference, Wegg?"

"The difference, sir?" Mr. Wegg was faltering and in danger of breaking down, when a bright thought flashed upon him. "The difference, sir? There you place me in a difficulty, Mr. Boffin. Suffice it to observe, that the difference is best postponed to some other occasion when Mrs. Boffin does not honor us with her company. In Mrs. Boffin's presence, sir, we had better drop it."

Mr. Wegg thus came out of his disadvantage with quite a chivalrous air, and not only that, but by dint of repeating with a manly delicacy, "In Mrs. Boffin's presence, sir, we had better drop it!" turned the disadvantage on Boffin, who felt that he had committed himself in a very painful manner.

Then Mr. Wegg, in a dry, unflinching way, entered on his task; going straight across country at everything that came before him; taking all the hard words, biographical and geographical; getting rather shaken by Hadrian, Trajan, and the Antonines; stumbling at Polybius (pronounced Polly Beeious, and supposed by Mr. Boffin to be a Roman virgin, and by Mrs. Boffin to be responsible for that necessity of dropping it); heavily unseated by Titus Antoninus Pius; up again and galloping smoothly with Augustus; finally, getting over the ground well with Commodus, who, under the appellation of Commodious, was held by Mr. Boffin to have been quite unworthy of his English origin, and "not to have acted up to his name" in

his government of the Roman people. With the death of this personage, Mr. Wegg terminated his first reading; long before which consummation several total eclipses of Mrs. Boffin's candle behind her black-velvet disc would have been very alarming, but for being regularly accompanied by a potent smell of burnt pens when her feathers took fire, which acted as a restorative and woke her. Mr. Wegg, having read on by rote and attached as few ideas as possible to the text, came out of the encounter fresh; but Mr. Boffin, who had soon laid down his unfinished pipe, and had ever since sat intently staring with his eyes and mind at the confounding enormities of the Romans, was so severely punished that he could hardly wish his literary friend Good-night, and articulate "To-morrow."

"Commodious," gasped Mr. Boffin, staring at the moon, after letting Wegg out at the gate, and fastening it: "Commodius fights in that wild-beast show, seven hundred and thirty-five times in one character only! As if that wasn't stunning enough, a hundred lions is turned into the same wild-beast show all at once! As if that wasn't stunning enough, Commodious, in another character, kills 'em all off in a hundred goes! As if that wasn't stunning enough, Vittle-us (and well named, too) eats six millions' worth English money in seven months! Wegg takes it easy, but upon my soul, to a old bird like myself, these are scarers. And even now that Commodious is strangled, I don't see a way to our bettering ourselves." Mr. Boffin added, as he turned his pensive steps toward the bower, and shook his head, "I didn't think this morning there was half so many Scarers in Print. But I'm in for it now!"

MR. and Mrs. Lammle have walked for some time on the Shanklin sands, and one may see by their foot-prints that they have not walked arm-in-arm, and that they have not walked in a straight track, and that they have walked in a moody humor; for the lady has prodded little spirting holes in the damp sand before her with her parasol, and the

gentleman has trailed his stick after him. As if he were of the Mephistopheles family indeed, and had walked with a drooping tail.

“Do you mean to tell me, then, Sophronia—”

Thus he begins, after a long silence, when Sophronia flashes fiercely, and turns upon him.

“Don’t put it upon *me*, sir. I ask you, do *you* mean to tell me?”

Mr. Lammle falls silent again, and they walk as before. Mrs. Lammle opens her nostrils, and bites her under-lip; Mr. Lammle takes his gingerous whiskers in his left hand, and, bringing them together, frowns furtively at his beloved, out of a thick gingerous bush.

“Do *I* mean to say!” Mrs. Lammle after a time repeats, with indignation. “Putting it on me! The unmanly disingenuousness!”

Mr. Lammle stops, releases his whiskers, and looks at her. “The what?”

Mrs. Lammle haughtily replies, without stopping, and without looking back. “The meanness.”

He is at her side again in a pace or two, and he retorts: “That is not what you said. You said disingenuousness.”

“What if I did?”

“There is no ‘if’ in the case. You did.”

“I did, then. And what of it?”

“What of it?” says Mr. Lammle. “Have you the face to utter the word to me?”

“The face, too!” replied Mrs. Lammle, staring at him with cold scorn. “Pray, how dare you, sir, utter the word to me?”

“I never did.”

As this happens to be true, Mrs. Lammle is thrown on the feminine resource of saying, “I don’t care what you uttered or did not utter.”

After a little more walking and a little more silence, Mr. Lammle breaks the latter.

"You shall proceed in your own way. You claim a right to ask me do I mean to tell you. Do I mean to tell you what?"

"That you are a man of property?"

"No."

"Then you married me on false pretences?"

"So be it. Next comes what you mean to say. Do you mean to say you are a woman of property?"

"No."

"Then you married me on false pretences."

"If you were so dull a fortune-hunter that you deceived yourself, or if you were so greedy and grasping that you were overwilling to be deceived by appearances, is it my fault, you adventurer?" the lady demands with great asperity.

"I asked Veneering, and he told me you were rich."

"Veneering!" with great contempt. "And what does Veneering know about me!"

"Was he not your trustee?"

"No. I have no trustee, but the one you saw on the day when you fraudulently married me. And his trust is not a very difficult one, for it is only an annuity of a hundred and fifteen pounds. I think there are some odd shillings or pence, if you are very particular."

Mr. Lammle bestows a by no means loving look upon the partner of his joys and sorrows, and he mutters something, but checks himself.

"Question for question. It is my turn again, Mrs. Lammle. What made you suppose me a man of property?"

"You made me suppose you so. Perhaps you will deny that you always presented yourself to me in that character?"

"But you asked somebody, too. Come, Mrs. Lammle, admission for admission. You asked somebody?"

"I asked Veneering."

"And Veneering knew as much of me as he knew of you, or as anybody knows of him."

After more silent walking, the bride stops short, to say in a passionate manner:

"I never will forgive the Veneerings for this!"

"Neither will I," returns the bridegroom.

With that they walk again; she making those angry spirits in the sand, he dragging that dejected tail. The tide is low, and seems to have thrown them together high on the bare shore. A gull comes sweeping by their heads, and flouts them. There was a golden surface on the brown cliffs but now, and behold they are only damp earth. A taunting roar comes from the sea, and the far-out rollers mount upon one another, to look at the entrapped impostors, and to join in impish and exultant gambols.

"Do you pretend to believe," Mrs. Lammle resumes, sternly, "when you talk of my marrying you for worldly advantages, that it was within the bounds of reasonable probability that I would have married you for yourself?"

"Again there are two sides to the question, Mrs. Lammle. What do you pretend to believe?"

"So you first deceive me and then insult me!" cries the lady, with a heaving bosom.

"Not at all. I have originated nothing. The double-edged question was yours."

"Was mine!" the bride repeats, and her parasol breaks in her angry hand.

His color has turned to a livid white, and ominous marks have come to light about his nose, as if the finger of the very devil himself had, within the last few moments, touched it here and there. But he has repressive power, and she has none.

"Throw it away," he coolly recommends as to the parasol; "you have made it useless; you look ridiculous with it."

Whereupon she calls him in her rage, "A deliberate villain," and so casts the broken thing from her as that it strikes him in falling. The finger-marks are something whiter for the instant, but he walks on at her side.

She burst into tears, declaring herself the wretchedest, the most deceived, the worst-used, of women. Then she says that if she had the courage to kill herself, she would do it. Then

she calls him vile impostor. Then she asks him, why, in the disappointment of his base speculation, he does not take her life with his own hand, under the present favorable circumstances. Then she cries again. Then she is enraged again, and makes some mention of swindlers. Finally, she sits down crying on a block of stone, and is in all the known and unknown humors of her sex at once. Pending her changes, those aforesaid marks in his face have come and gone, now here now there, like white stops of a pipe on which the diabolical performer has played a tune. Also his livid lips are parted at last, as if he were breathless with running. Yet he is not.

“**W**HAT can a woman at my age do? My husband and I deceived one another when we married; we must bear the consequences of the deception—that is to say, bear one another, and bear the burden of scheming together for to-day’s dinner and to-morrow’s breakfast—till death divorces us.”

FOR it is not, in Christian countries, with the Jews as with other peoples. Men say, “This is a bad Greek, but there are good Greeks. This is a bad Turk, but there are good Turks.” Not so with the Jews. Men find the bad among us easily enough—among what peoples are the bad not easily found?—but they take the worst of us as samples of the best; they take the lowest of us as presentations of the highest; and they say “All Jews are alike.” If, doing what I was content to do here, because I was grateful for the past, and have small need of money now, I have been a Christian, I could have done it, compromising no one but my individual self. But doing it as a Jew, I could not choose but compromise the Jews of all conditions and all countries. It is a little hard upon us, but it is the truth.

HOWEVER, when dinner is served, and Lightwood drops into his old place over against Lady Tippins, she can be fended off no longer. “Long-banished Robinson Crusoe,”

says the charmer, exchanging salutations, "how did you leave the Island?"

"Thank you," says Lightwood. "It made no complaint of being in pain anywhere."

"Say, how did you leave the savages?" asks Lady Tippins.

"They were becoming civilized when I left Juan Fernandez," says Lightwood; "at least they were eating one another, which looked like it."

"Tormentor!" returns the dear young creature. "You know what I mean, and you trifle with my impatience. Tell me something, immediately, about the married pair. You were at the wedding."

"Was I, by the bye?" Mortimer pretends, at great leisure, to consider. "So I was!"

"How was the bride dressed? In rowing costume?"

Mortimer looks gloomy, and declines to answer.

"I hope she steered herself, skiffed herself, paddled herself, larboarded and starboarded herself, or whatever the technical term may be, to the ceremony?" proceeds the playful Tippins.

"However she got to it, she graced it," says Mortimer.

Lady Tippins with a skittish little scream, attracts the general attention. "Graced it! Take care of me if I faint, Veneering. He means to tell us, that a horrid female waterman is graceful!"

"Pardon me. I mean to tell you nothing, Lady Tippins," replies Lightwood. And keeps his word by eating his dinner with a show of the utmost indifference.

ON the grateful impulse of the moment, Mr. Sloppy kissed Mrs. Boffin's hand, and then detaching himself from that good creature that he might have room enough for his feelings, threw back his head, opened his mouth wide, and uttered a dismal howl. It was creditable to his tenderness of heart, but suggested that he might on occasion give some offence to the neighbors; the rather, as the footman looked in, and begged

pardon, finding he was not wanted, but excused himself, on the ground "that he thought it was Cats."

HOW the fascinating Tippins gets on when arraying herself for the bewilderment of the senses of men, is known only to the Graces and her maid; but perhaps even that engaging creature, though not reduced to the self-dependence of Twemlow, could dispense with a good deal of the trouble attendant on the daily restoration of her charms, seeing that as to her face and neck this adorable divinity is, as it were, a diurnal species of lobster—throwing off a shell every forenoon, and needing to keep in a retired spot until the new crust hardens.

"I COULD not have done it all, or nearly all, of myself," said Lizzie. "I should not have wanted the will; but I should not have had the power, without our managing partner."

"Surely not the Jew who received us?" said Mrs. Milvey.

("My dear," observed her husband in parenthesis, "why not?")

"The gentleman certainly is a Jew," said Lizzie, "and the lady, his wife, is a Jewess, and I was first brought to their notice by a Jew. But I think there cannot be kinder people in the world."

"But suppose they try to convert you!" suggested Mrs. Milvey, bristling in her good little way, as a clergyman's wife.

"To do what, ma'am?" asked Lizzie, with a modest smile.

"To make you change your religion," said Mrs. Milvey.

Lizzie shook her head, still smiling. "They have never asked me what my religion is. They asked me what my story was, and I told them. They asked me to be industrious and faithful, and I promised to be so. They most willingly and cheerfully do their duty to all of us who are employed here, and

we try to do ours to them. Indeed, they do much more than their duty to us, for they are wonderfully mindful of us in many ways."

"It is easy to see you're a favorite, my dear," said little Mrs. Milvey, not quite pleased.

"It would be very ungrateful in me to say I am not," returned Lizzie, "for I have been already raised to a place of confidence here. But that makes no difference in their following their own religion and leaving all of us to ours. They never talk of theirs to us, and they never talk of ours to us. If I was the last in the mill, it would be just the same. They never asked me what religion that poor thing had followed."

MISS WREN'S troublesome child was in the corner in deep disgrace and exhibiting great wretchedness in the shivering stage of prostration from drink.

"Ugh, you disgraceful boy!" exclaimed Miss Wren, attracted by the sound of his chattering teeth, "I wish they'd all drop down your throat and play at dice in your stomach! Boh, wicked child! Bee-baa, black sheep!"

FROM CHRISTMAS STORIES.

AFTER several turns, he sat down again. As he threw his head back in the chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell, a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house.

This might have lasted half a minute, or a minute, but it seemed an hour. The bells ceased as they had begun, together. They were succeeded by a clanking noise, deep down below, as if some person were dragging a heavy chain over the casks in the wine-merchant's cellar. Scrooge then remembered to have heard that ghosts in haunted houses were described as dragging chains.

The cellar-door flew open with a booming sound, and then he heard the noise much louder, on the floors below; then coming up the stairs; then coming straight towards his door.

"It's humbug still!" said Scrooge. "I won't believe it."

His color changed though, when, without a pause, it came on through the heavy door, and passed into the room before his eyes. Upon its coming in, the dying flame leaped up, as though it cried "I know him! Marley's ghost!" and fell again.

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pig-tail, usual waistcoat, tights, and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pig-tail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he drew was clasped about his middle. It was long, and wound about him like a tail; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel. His body was transparent; so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

Scrooge had often heard it said that Marley had no bowels, but he had never believed it until now.

No, nor did he believe it even now. Though he looked the phantom through and through, and saw it standing before him: though he felt the chilling influence of its death-cold eyes; and marked the very texture of the folded kerchief bound about its head and chin, which wrapper he had not observed before; he was still incredulous, and fought against his senses.

"How now!" said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. "What do you want with me?"

"Much!"—Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"Ask me who I *was*."

"Who *were* you then?" said Scrooge, raising his voice. "You're particular, for a shade." He was going to say "*to* a shade," but substituted this, as more appropriate.

"In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

"Can you—can you sit down?" asked Scrooge, looking doubtfully at him.

"I can."

"Do it, then."

Scrooge asked the question, because he didn't know whether a ghost so transparent might find himself in a condition to take a chair; and felt that in the event of its being impossible, it might involve the necessity of an embarrassing explanation. But the ghost sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your own senses?"

"I don't know," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

"Because," said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!"

Scrooge was not much in the habit of cracking jokes, nor did he feel in his heart by any means waggish then. The truth is, that he tried to be smart, as a means of distracting his own attention, and keeping down his terror; for the spectre's voice disturbed the very marrow in his bones.

To sit, staring at those fixed glazed eyes, in silence for a moment, would play, Scrooge felt, the very deuce with him. There was something very awful, too, in the spectre's being provided

with an infernal atmosphere of his own. Scrooge could not feel it himself; but this was clearly the case; for though the Ghost sat perfectly motionless, its hair, and skirts, and tassels, were still agitated as by the hot vapor from an oven.

“You see this toothpick?” said Scrooge, returning quickly to the charge, for the reason just assigned; and wishing, though it were only for a second, to divert the vision’s stony gaze from himself.

“I do,” replied the Ghost.

“You are not looking at it,” said Scrooge.

“But I see it,” said the Ghost, “notwithstanding.”

“Well!” returned Scrooge, “I have but to swallow this, and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of goblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you; humbug!”

At this the spirit raised a frightful cry, and shook its chain with such a dismal and appalling noise, that Scrooge held on tight to his chair, to save himself from falling in a swoon. But how much greater was his horror, when the phantom taking off the bandage round his head, as if it were too warm to wear indoors, its lower jaw dropped down upon its breast!

BUT he was early at the office next morning. Oh he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late. That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

And he did it; yes he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o’clock.

“Hallo!” growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice as near as he could feign it. “What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?”

"I am very sorry, sir," said Bob. "I *am* behind my time."

"You are!" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, sir, if you please."

"It's only once a year, sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry, yesterday, sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge. "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again: "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

"**H**EYDEY!" said John, in his slow way. "It's merrier than ever to-night, I think."

"And it's sure to bring us good fortune, John. It always has done so. To have a Cricket on the Hearth is the luckiest thing in the world!"

John looked at her as if he had very nearly got the thought into his head, that she was his Cricket in chief, and he quite agreed with her. But, it was probably one of his narrow escapes, for he said nothing.

"The first time I heard its cheerful little note, John, was on that night when you brought me home—when you brought me to my new home here; its little mistress. Nearly a year ago. You recollect, John?"

O yes. John remembered. I should think so!

"Its chirp was such a welcome to me! It seemed so full of promise and encouragement. It seemed to say, you would be kind and gentle with me, and would not expect (I had a fear of that, John, then) to find an old head on the shoulders of your foolish little wife."

John thoughtfully patted one of the shoulders, and then the head, as though he would have said no, no; he had had no such expectation; he had been quite content to take them as they were. And really he had reason. They were very comely.

"It spoke the truth, John, when it seemed to say so : for you have ever been, I am sure, the best, the most considerate, the most affectionate of husbands to me. This has been a happy home, John ; and I love the Cricket for its sake !"

"Why so do I then," said the Carrier. "So do I, Dot."

"I love it for the many times I have heard it, and the many thoughts its harmless music has given me. Sometimes, in the twilight, when I have felt a little solitary and down-hearted, John—before baby was here, to keep me company and make the house gay—when I have thought how lonely you would be if I should die ; how lonely I should be, if I could know that you had lost me, dear ; its Chirp, Chirp, Chirp upon the hearth, has seemed to tell me of another little voice, so sweet, so very dear to me, before whose coming sound, my trouble vanished like a dream. And when I used to fear—I did fear once, John, I was very young you know—that ours might prove to be an ill-assorted marriage, I being such a child, and you more like my guardian than my husband ; and that you might not, however hard you tried, be able to learn to love me, as you hoped and prayed you might ; its Chirp, Chirp, Chirp, has cheered me up again, and filled me with new trust and confidence. I was thinking of these things to-night, dear, when I sat expecting you ; and I love the Cricket for their sake !"

SHE was about thirty years old, and had a sufficiently plump and cheerful face, though it was twisted up into an odd expression of tightness that made it comical. But the extraordinary homeliness of her gait and manner would have superseded any face in the world. To say that she had two left legs, and somebody else's arms, and that all four limbs seemed to be out of joint, and to start from perfectly wrong places when they were set in motion, is to offer the mildest outline of the reality. To say that she was perfectly content and satisfied with these arrangements, and regarded them as being no busi-

ness of hers, and that she took her arms and legs as they came, and allowed them to dispose of themselves just as it happened, is to render faint justice to her equanimity. Her dress was a prodigious pair of self-willed shoes, that never wanted to go where her feet went ; blue stockings ; a printed gown of many colors and the most hideous pattern procurable for money ; and a white apron. She always wore short sleeves, and always had, by some accident, grazed elbows, in which she took so lively an interest, that she was continually trying to turn them round and get impossible views of them. In general, a little cap perched somewhere on her head ; though it was rarely to be met with in the place usually occupied in other subjects by that article of dress ; but, from head to foot she was scrupulously clean, and maintained a kind of dislocated tidiness. Indeed, her laudable anxiety to be tidy and compact in her own conscience as well as in the public eye, gave rise to one of her most startling evolutions, which was to grasp herself sometimes by a sort of wooden handle (part of her clothing, and familiarly called a busk), and wrestle as it were with her garments, until they fell into a symmetrical arrangement.

Such, in outward form and garb, was Clemency Newcome.

“**Y**OU bad boy !” said Mr. Tetterby, “haven’t you any feeling for your poor father after the fatigues and anxieties of a hard winter’s day, since five o’clock in the morning, but must you wither his rest, and corrode his latest intelligence, with *your* wicious tricks ? Isn’t it enough, sir, that your brother ’Dolphus is toiling and moiling in the fog and cold, and you rolling in the lap of luxury with a—with a baby, and everything you can wish for,” said Mr. Tetterby, heaping this up as a great climax of blessings, “but must you make a wilderness of home, and maniacs of your parents ? Must you, Johnny ? Hey ?” At each interrogation, Mr. Tetterby made a feint of boxing his ears again, but thought better of it, and held his hand.

“Oh, father !” whimpered Johnny, “when I wasn’t doing

anything, I'm sure, but taking such care of Sally, and getting her to sleep. Oh, father !”

“I wish my little woman would come home !” said Mr. Tetterby, relenting and repenting, “I only wish my little woman would come home ! I ain't fit to deal with 'em. They make my head go round, and get the better of me. Oh, Johnny ! Isn't it enough that your dear mother has provided you with that sweet sister ?” indicating Moloch ; “isn't it enough that you were seven boys before, without a ray of gal, and that your dear mother went through what she *did* go through, on purpose that you might all of you have a little sister, but must you so behave yourself as to make my head swim ?”

“**Y**OU'RE right !” returned his father, listening. “Yes, that's the footstep of my little woman.”

The process of induction, by which Mr. Tetterby had come to the conclusion that his wife was a little woman, was his own secret. She would have made two editions of himself, very easily. Considered as an individual, she was rather remarkable for being robust and portly ; but considered with reference to her husband, her dimensions became magnificent. Nor did they assume a less imposing proportion, when studied with reference to the size of her seven sons, who were but diminutive. In the case of Sally, however, Mrs. Tetterby had asserted herself at last ; as nobody knew better than the victim Johnny, who weighed and measured that exacting idol every hour in the day.

MASTER ADOLPHUS was also in the newspaper line of life, being employed, by a more thriving firm than his father and Co., to vend newspapers at a railway station, where his chubby little person, like a shabbily disguised Cupid, and his shrill little voice (he was not much more than ten years old), were as well known as the hoarse panting of the

locomotive, running in and out. His juvenility might have been at some loss for a harmless outlet, in this early application to traffic, but for a fortunate discovery he made of a means of entertaining himself, and of dividing the long day into stages of interest, without neglecting business. This ingenious invention, remarkable, like many great discoveries, for its simplicity, consisted in varying the first vowel in the word "paper," and substituting in its stead, at different periods of the day, all the other vowels in grammatical succession. Thus, before daylight in the winter-time, he went to and fro, in his little oilskin cap and cape, and his big comforter, piercing the heavy air with his cry of "Morn-ing Pa-per!" which, about an hour before noon, changed to "Morn-ing Pep-per!" which, at about two, changed to "Morn-ing Pip-per!" which, in a couple of hours, changed to "Morn-ing Pop-per!" and so declined with the sun into "Eve-ning Pupper!" to the great relief and comfort of this young gentleman's spirits.

"**Y**OU know, 'Dolphus, my dear," said Mrs. Tetterby, "that when I was single, I might have given myself away in several directions. At one time, four after me at once; two of them were sons of Mars."

"We're all sons of Ma's, my dear," said Mr. Tetterby, "jointly with Pa's."

"I don't mean that," replied his wife, "I mean soldiers—serjeants."

"Oh!" said Mr. Tetterby.

IT was a peculiarity of this baby to be always cutting teeth. Whether they never came, or whether they came and went away again, is not in evidence; but it had certainly cut enough, on the showing of Mrs. Tetterby, to make a handsome dental provision for the sign of the Bull and Mouth. All sorts

of objects were impressed for the rubbing of its gums, notwithstanding that it always carried, dangling at its waist (which was immediately under its chin), a bone ring, large enough to have represented the rosary of a young nun. Knife-handles, umbrella-tops, the heads of walking-sticks selected from the stock, the fingers of the family in general, but especially of Johnny, nutmeg-graters, crusts, the handles of doors, and the cool knobs on the tops of pokers, were among the commonest instruments indiscriminately applied for this baby's relief. The amount of electricity that must have been rubbed out of it in a week, is not to be calculated. Still Mrs. Tetterby always said "it was coming through, and then the child would be herself;" and still it never did come through, and the child continued to be somebody else.

The tempers of the little Tetterbys had sadly changed with a few hours. Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby themselves were not more altered than their offspring. Usually they were an unselfish, good-natured, yielding little race, sharing short-commons when it happened (which was pretty often) contentedly and even generously, and taking a great deal of enjoyment out of a very little meat. But they were fighting now, not only for the soap and water, but even for the breakfast which was yet in perspective. The hand of every little Tetterby was against the other little Tetterbys; and even Johnny's hand—the patient, much-enduring, and devoted Johnny—rose against the baby! Yes. Mrs. Tetterby, going to the door by a mere accident, saw him viciously pick out a weak place in the suit of armor, where a slap would tell, and slap that blessed child.

Mrs. Tetterby had him in the parlor, by the collar, in that same flash of time, and repaid him the assault with usury thereto.

"You brute, you murdering little boy," said Mrs. Tetterby. "Had you the heart to do it?"

"Why don't her teeth come through, then," retorted Johnny, in a loud rebellious voice, "instead of bothering me? How would you like it yourself?"

"Like it, sir!" said Mrs. Tetterby, relieving him of his dishonored load.

"Yes, like it," said Johnny. "How would you? Not at all. If you was me, you'd go for a soldier. I will, too. There an't no babies in the army."

Mr. Tetterby, who had arrived upon the scene of action, rubbed his chin thoughtfully, instead of correcting the rebel, and seemed rather struck by this view of a military life.

FROM SKETCHES.

WE will begin the present with the clergyman. Our curate is a young gentleman of such prepossessing appearance, and fascinating manners, that within one month after his first appearance in the parish, half the young-lady inhabitants were melancholy with religion, and the other half, desponding with love. Never were so many young ladies seen in our parish-church on Sunday before; and never had the little round angels' faces on Mr. Tomkins's monument in the side aisle beheld such devotion on earth as they all exhibited. He was about five-and-twenty when he first came to astonish the parishioners. He parted his hair on the centre of his forehead in the form of a Norman arch, wore a brilliant of the first water on the fourth finger of his left hand (which he always applied to his left cheek when he read prayers), and had a deep sepulchral voice of unusual solemnity. Innumerable were the calls made by prudent mammas on our new curate, and innumerable the invitations with which he was assailed, and which, to do him justice, he readily accepted.

ONE would have supposed that, by this time, the theme of universal admiration was lifted to the very pinnacle of popularity. No such thing. The curate began to cough;

four fits of coughing one morning between the Litany and the Epistle, and five in the afternoon service. Here was a discovery—the curate was consumptive. How interestingly melancholy! If the young ladies were energetic before, the sympathy and solicitude now knew no bounds. Such a man as the curate—such a dear—such a perfect love—to be consumptive! It was too much. Anonymous presents of black-currant jam, and lozenges, elastic waistcoats, bosom friends, and warm stockings, poured in upon the curate until he was as completely fitted out with winter clothing, as if he were on the verge of an expedition to the North Pole; verbal bulletins of the state of his health were circulated throughout the parish half-a-dozen times a day; and the curate was in the very zenith of his popularity.

SOME phrenologists affirm, that the agitation of a man's brain by different passions, produces corresponding developments in the form of his skull. Do not let us be understood as pushing our theory to the length of asserting, that any alteration in a man's disposition would produce a visible effect on the feature of his knocker. Our position merely is, that in such a case, the magnetism which must exist between a man and his knocker, would induce the man to remove, and seek some knocker more congenial to his altered feelings. If you ever find a man changing his habitation without any reasonable pretext, depend upon it, that, although he may not be aware of the fact himself, it is because he and his knocker are at variance. This is a new theory, but we venture to launch it, nevertheless, as being quite as ingenious and infallible as many thousand of the learned speculations which are daily broached for public good and private fortune-making.

WHEN the company *did* go away, instead of walking quietly down the street, as anybody else's company would have done, they amused themselves by making alarming

and frightful noises, and counterfeiting the shrieks of females in distress ; and one night, a red-faced gentleman in a white hat knocked in the most urgent manner at the door of the powdered-headed old gentleman at No. 3, and when the powdered-headed old gentleman, who thought one of his married daughters must have been taken ill prematurely, had groped downstairs, and after a great deal of unbolting and key-turning, opened the street-door, the red-faced man in the white hat said he hoped he'd excuse his giving him so much trouble, but he'd feel obliged if he'd favor him with a glass of cold spring water, and the loan of a shilling for a cab to take him home, on which the old gentleman slammed the door and went upstairs, and threw the contents of his water-jug out of window—very straight, only it went over the wrong man ; and the whole street was involved in confusion.

ON a summer's evening, when the large watering-pot has been filled and emptied some fourteen times, and the old couple have quite exhausted themselves by trotting about, you will see them sitting happily together in the little summer-house, enjoying the calm and peace of the twilight, and watching the shadows as they fall upon the garden, and gradually growing thicker and more sombre, obscure the tints of their gayest flowers—no bad emblem of the years that have silently rolled over their heads deadening in their course the brightest hues of early hopes and feelings which have long since faded away. These are their only recreations, and they require no more. They have within themselves the materials of comfort and content ; and the only anxiety of each, is to die before the other.

WE grant that the banks of the Thames are very beautiful at Richmond and Twickenham, and other distant havens, often sought though seldom reached ; but from the

“Red-us” back to Blackfriar’s Bridge, the scene is wonderfully changed. The Penitentiary is a noble building, no doubt, and the sportive youths who “go in” at that particular part of the river, on a summer’s evening, may be all very well in perspective ; but when you are obliged to keep in shore coming home, and the young ladies will color up, and look perseveringly the other way, while the married dittoes cough slightly, and stare very hard at the water, you feel awkward—especially if you happen to have been attempting the most distant approach to sentimentality, for an hour or two previously.

EVERY woman in “the gardens,” who has been married for any length of time, must have had twins on two or three occasions ; it is impossible to account for the extent of juvenile population in any other way.

CHRISTMAS time ! That man must be a misanthrope indeed, in whose breast something like a jovial feeling is not roused—in whose mind some pleasant associations are not awakened—by the recurrence of Christmas. There are people who will tell you that Christmas is not to them what it used to be ; that each succeeding Christmas has found some cherished hope, or happy prospect, of the year before, dimmed or passed away ; that the present only serves to remind them of reduced circumstances and straightened incomes—of the feasts they once bestowed on hollow friends, and of the cold looks that meet them now, in adversity and misfortune. Never heed such dismal reminiscences. There are few men who have lived long enough in the world, who cannot call up such thoughts any day in the year. Then do not select the merriest of the three hundred and sixty-five for your doleful recollections, but draw your chair nearer the blazing fire—fill the glass and send round the song—and if your room be smaller than it was a dozen years ago, or if your glass be filled with

reeking punch, instead of sparkling wine, put a good face on the matter, and empty it off-hand, and fill another, and troll off the old ditty you used to sing, and thank God it's no worse. Look on the merry faces of your children (if you have any) as they sit round the fire. One little seat may be empty ; one slight form that gladdened the father's heart, and roused the mother's pride to look upon, may not be there. Dwell not upon the past ; think not that one short year ago, the fair child now resolving into dust, sat before you, with the bloom of health upon its cheek, and the gayety of infancy in its joyous eye. Reflect upon your present blessings—of which every man has many—not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some. Fill your glass again, with a merry face and contented heart. Our life on it, but your Christmas shall be merry, and your new year a happy one.

Who can be insensible to the outpourings of good feeling, and the honest interchange of affectionate attachment, which abound at this season of the year ? A Christmas family party ! We know nothing in nature more delightful ! There seems a magic in the very name of Christmas. Petty jealousies and discords are forgotten ; social feelings are awakened, in bosoms to which they have long been strangers ; father and son, or brother and sister, who have met and passed with averted gaze, or a look of cold recognition, for months before, proffer and return the cordial embrace, and bury their past animosities in their present happiness. Kindly hearts that have yearned towards each other, but have been withheld by false notions of pride and self-dignity, are again reunited, and all is kindness and benevolence ! Would that Christmas lasted the whole year through (as it ought), and that the prejudices and passions which deform our better nature, were never called into action among those to whom they should ever be strangers !

“**T**HE Misses Crumpton,” were two unusually tall, particularly thin, and exceedingly skinny personages ; very upright, and very yellow. Miss Amelia Crumpton owned to

thirty-eight, and Miss Maria Crumpton admitted she was forty ; an admission which was rendered perfectly unnecessary by the self-evident fact of her being at least fifty. They dressed in the most interesting manner—like twins ; and looked as happy and comfortable as a couple of marigolds run to seed. They were very precise, had the strictest possible ideas of propriety, wore false hair, and always smelt very strongly of lavender.

MRS. TIBBS was somewhat short of stature, and Mr. Tibbs was by no means a large man. He had, moreover, very short legs, but by way of indemnification, his face was peculiarly long. He was to his wife what the 0 is in 90—he was of some importance *with* her—he was nothing without her. Mrs. Tibbs was always talking. Mr. Tibbs rarely spoke ; but, if it were at any time possible to put in a word, when he should have said nothing at all, he had that talent. Mrs. Tibbs detested long stories, and Mr. Tibbs had one, the conclusion of which had never been heard by his most intimate friends. It always began, “I recollect when I was in the volunteer corps, in eighteen hundred and six,”—but, as he spoke very slowly and softly, and his better half very quickly and loudly, he rarely got beyond the introductory sentence. He was a melancholy specimen of the story-teller. He was the wandering Jew of Joe Millerism.

MR. CALTON was a superannuated beau—an old boy. He used to say of himself that although his features were not regularly handsome, they were striking. They certainly were. It was impossible to look at his face without being reminded of a chubby street-door knocker, half-lion half-monkey ; and the comparison might be extended to his whole character and conversation. He had stood still, while everything else had been moving. He never originated a conversation, or started an idea ; but if any common-place topic were

broached, or, to pursue the comparison, if anybody *lifted him up*, he would hammer away with surprising rapidity. He had the tic-doloureux occasionally, and then he might be said to be muffled, because he did not make quite as much noise as at other times, when he would go on prosing, rat-tat-tat the same thing over and over again. He had never been married; but he was still on the look-out for a wife with money. He had a life interest worth about 300*l.* a year—he was exceedingly vain, and inordinately selfish. He had acquired the reputation of being the very pink of politeness, and he walked round the park, and up Regent Street, every day.

MRS. MAPLESONE was an enterprising widow of about fifty: shrewd, scheming, and good-looking. She was amiably anxious on behalf of her daughters; in proof whereof she used to remark, that she would have no objection to marry again, if it would benefit her dear girls—she could have no other motive. The “dear girls” themselves were not at all insensible to the merits of “a good establishment.” One of them was twenty-five; the other, three years younger. They had been at different watering-places, for four seasons: they had gambled at libraries, read books in balconies, sold at fancy fairs, danced at assemblies, talked sentiment—in short, they had done all that industrious girls could do—but, as yet, to no purpose.

“WELL, my dear ma’am, and how are we?” inquired Wosky, in a soothing tone.

“Very ill, doctor—very ill,” said Mrs. Bloss, in a whisper.

“Ah! we must take care of ourselves;—we must, indeed,” said the obsequious Wosky, as he felt the pulse of his interesting patient.

“How is our appetite?”

Mrs. Bloss shook her head.

“Our friend requires great care,” said Wosky, appealing to Mrs. Tibbs, who of course assented. “I hope, however, with the blessing of Providence, that we shall be enabled to make her quite stout again.” Mrs. Tibbs wondered in her own mind what the patient would be when she was made quite stout.

“We must take stimulants,” said the cunning Wosky—“plenty of nourishment, and, above all, we must keep our nerves quiet; we positively must not give way to our sensibilities. We must take all we can get,” concluded the doctor, as he pocketed his fee, “and we must keep quiet.”

“Dear man!” exclaimed Mrs. Bloss, as the doctor stepped into his carriage.

“Charming creature indeed—quite a lady’s man!” said Mrs. Tibbs, and Doctor Wosky rattled away to make fresh gulls of delicate females, and pocket fresh fees.

FROM THE UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

ONE man cast up by the sea bore about him, printed on a perforated lace card, the following singular (and unavailing) charm:

A BLESSING.

May the blessing of God await thee. May the sun of glory shine around thy bed; and may the gates of plenty, honor, and happiness be ever open to thee. May no sorrow distress thy days; may no grief disturb thy nights. May the pillow of peace kiss thy cheek, and the pleasures of imagination attend thy dreams; and when length of years makes thee tired of earthly joys, and the curtain of death gently closes around thy last sleep of human existence, may the Angel of God attend thy bed, and take care that the expiring lamp of life shall not receive one rude blast to hasten on its extinction.

THERE was a model pauper introduced in like manner, who appeared to me to be the most intolerably arrogant pauper ever relieved, and to show himself in absolute want and dire necessity of a course of Stone Yard. For how did this pauper testify to his having received the gospel of humility? A gentleman met him in the workhouse, and said (which I myself really thought good-natured of him), "Ah, John! I am sorry to see you here. I am sorry to see you so poor." "Poor, sir!" replied that man, drawing himself up, "I am the son of a Prince! *My* father is the King of kings. *My* father is the Lord of lords. *My* father is the ruler of all the Princes of the earth!" etc. And this was what all the preacher's fellow-sinners might come to, if they would embrace this blessed book—which I must say it did some violence to my own feelings of reverence to see held out at arm's-length at frequent intervals, and soundingly slapped, like a slow lot at a sale. Now, could I help asking myself the question, whether the mechanic before me, who must detect the preacher as being wrong about the visible manner of himself and the like of himself, and about such a noisy lip-server as that pauper, might not, most unhappily for the usefulness of the occasion, doubt that preacher's being right about things not visible to human senses?

Again. Is it necessary or advisable to address such an audience continually as "fellow-sinners"? Is it not enough to be fellow-creatures, born yesterday, suffering and striving to-day, dying to-morrow? By our common humanity, my brothers and sisters, by our common capacities for pain and pleasure, by our common laughter and our common tears, by our common aspiration to reach something better than ourselves, by our common tendency to believe in something good, and to invest whatever we love or whatever we lose with some qualities that are superior to our own failings and weaknesses as we know them in our own poor hearts—by these, hear me!—surely it is enough to be fellow-creatures. Surely it includes the other designation, and some touching meanings over and above.

THAT these Sunday meetings in Theatres are good things, I do not doubt. Nor do I doubt that they will work lower and lower down in the social scale, if those who preside over them will be very careful on two heads : firstly, not to disparage the places in which they speak, or the intelligence of their hearers ; secondly, not to set themselves in antagonism to the natural inborn desire of the mass of mankind to recreate themselves and to be amused.

AS master of the ceremonies, he called all the figures, and occasionally addressed himself parenthetically after this manner. When he was very loud, I use capitals.

“ Now den ! Hoy ! **ONE.** Right and left. (Put a steam on, gib ’um powder.) **LA-**dies’ chail. **BAL-**loon say. **Lemon-**ade ! **Two.** **AD-**warnse and go back (gib ’ell a breakdown, shake it out o’ yerselbs, keep a movil). **SWING-**corners, **BAL-**loon say, and **Lemonade** ! (Hoy !) **THREE.** **GENT** come for’ard with a lady and go back, hoppersite come for’ard and do what yer can. (Aeiohoy !) **BAL-**loon say, and leetle lemonade (Dat hair nigger by ’um fireplace ’hind a’ time, shake it out o’ yerselbs, gib ’ell a breakdown). Now den ! Hoy ! **FOUR** ! **Lemonade.** **BAL-**loon say, and swing. **FOUR** ladies meets in ’um middle, **FOUR** gents goes round ’um ladies, **FOUR** gents passes out under ’um ladies’ arms, **SWING**,—and lemonade till ’a moosic can’t play no more ! (Hoy, Hoy !) ”

The male dancers were all blacks, and one was an unusually powerful man of six feet three or four. The sound of their flat feet on the floor was as unlike the sound of white feet as their faces were unlike white faces. They toed and heeled, shuffled, double-shuffled, double-double-shuffled, covered the buckle, and beat the time out rarely, dancing with a great show of teeth, and with a childish good-humored enjoyment that was very prepossessing.

I AM bound to acknowledge (as it tends rather to my uncommercial confusion), that I occasioned a difficulty in this establishment by having taken the child in my arms. For

on my offering to restore it to a ferocious joker, not unstimulated by rum, who claimed to be its mother, that unnatural parent put her hands behind her, and declined to accept it; backing into the fireplace, and very shrilly declaring, regardless of remonstrance from her friends, that she knowed it to be Law, that whoever took a child from its mother, of his own will, was bound to stick to it.

THE opening of the service recalls my wandering thoughts. I then find, to my astonishment, that I have been, and still am, taking a strong kind of invisible snuff up my nose, into my eyes and down my throat. I wink, sneeze, and cough. The clerk sneezes, the clergyman winks, the unseen organist sneezes and coughs (and probably winks); all our little party wink, sneeze, and cough. The snuff seems to be made of the decay of matting, wood, cloth, stone, iron, earth, and something else. Is the something else the decay of dead citizens in the vaults below? As sure as Death it is! Not only in the cold, damp February day do we cough and sneeze dead citizens, all through the service, but dead citizens have got into the very bellows of the organ, and half choked the same. We stamp our feet to warm them, and dead citizens arise in heavy clouds. Dead citizens stick upon the walls, and lie pulverized on the sounding-board over the clergyman's head, and, when a gust of air comes, tumble down upon him.

FROM the dead wall associated on those houseless nights with this too-common story, I chose next to wander by Bethlehem Hospital,—partly because it lay on my road round to Westminster, partly because I had a night fancy in my head which could be best pursued within sight of its walls and dome. And the fancy was this: Are not the sane and the insane equal at night as the sane lie a-dreaming? Are not all of us outside this hospital, who dream, more or less in the condition

of those inside it, every night of our lives? Are we not nightly persuaded, as they daily are, that we associate preposterously with kings and queens, emperors and empresses, and notabilities of all sorts? Do we not nightly jumble events and personages and times and places, as these do daily? Are we not sometimes troubled by our own sleeping inconsistencies, and do we not vexedly try to account for them or excuse them, just as these do sometimes in respect of their waking delusions? Said an afflicted man to me, when I was last in a hospital like this, "Sir, I can frequently fly." I was half ashamed to reflect that so could I—by night. Said a woman to me on the same occasion, "Queen Victoria frequently comes to dine with me; and her Majesty and I dine off peaches and macaroni in our nightgowns, and his Royal Highness the Prince Consort does us the honor to make a third on horseback in a Field-Marshal's uniform." Could I refrain from reddening with consciousness when I remembered the amazing royal parties I myself had given (at night), the unaccountable viands I had put on table, and my extraordinary manner of conducting myself on those distinguished occasions? I wonder that the great master who knew everything, when he called Sleep the death of each day's life, did not call Dreams the insanity of each day's sanity.

WHEN the American civil war rendered it necessary, first in Glasgow, and afterwards in Manchester, that the working people should be shown how to avail themselves of the advantages derivable from system, and from the combination of numbers, in the purchase and the cooking of their food, this truth was above all things borne in mind. The quick consequence was, that suspicion and reluctance were vanquished, and that the effort resulted in an astonishing and a complete success.

Such thoughts passed through my mind on a July morning of this summer, as I walked towards Commercial Street (not Un-

commercial Street), Whitechapel. The Glasgow and Manchester system had been lately set a-going there by certain gentlemen who felt an interest in its diffusion, and I had been attracted by the following hand-bill printed on rose-colored paper :—

SELF-SUPPORTING
COOKING DEPOT
FOR THE WORKING CLASSES,
Commercial Street, Whitechapel,
Where Accommodation is provided for Dining
comfortably 300 Persons
at a time.

Open from 7 A. M. till 7 P. M.

PRICES.

All Articles of the BEST QUALITY.

Cup of Tea or Coffee	One Penny
Bread and Butter	One Penny
Bread and Cheese	One Penny
Slice of Bread One Half-penny or	One Penny
Boiled Egg	One Penny
Ginger Beer	One Penny

The above Articles always ready.

Besides the above may be had, from
12 to 3 o'clock,

Bowl of Scotch Broth	One Penny
Bowl of Soup	One Penny
Plate of Potatoes	One Penny
Plate of Minced Beef	Twopence
Plate of Cold Beef	Twopence
Plate of Cold Ham	Twopence
Plate of Plum Pudding, or Rice	One Penny

WHAT a city Lyons is ! Talk about people feeling, at certain unlucky times, as if they had tumbled from the clouds ! Here is a whole town that has tumbled, anyhow, out of the sky ; having been first caught up, like other stones that tumble down from that region, out of fens and barren places, dismal to behold ! The two great streets through which the

two great rivers dash, and all the little streets whose name is Legion, were scorching, blistering, and sweltering. The houses, high and vast, dirty to excess, rotten as old cheeses, and as thickly peopled. All up the hills that hem the city in, these houses swarm; and the mites inside were lolling out of the windows, and drying their ragged clothes on poles, and crawling in and out at the doors, and coming out to pant and gasp upon the pavement, and creeping in and out among huge piles and bales of fusty, musty, stifling goods; and living, or rather not dying till their time should come, in an exhausted receiver.

THEY are not a very joyous people, and are seldom seen to dance on their holidays: the staple places of entertainment among the women, being the churches and the public walks. They are very good-tempered, obliging, and industrious. Industry has not made them clean, for their habitations are extremely filthy, and their usual occupation on a fine Sunday morning, is to sit at their doors, hunting in each others' heads. But their dwellings are so close and confined that if these parts of the city had been beaten down by Massena in the time of the terrible Blockade, it would have at least occasioned one public benefit among many misfortunes.

The Peasant Women, with naked feet and legs, are so constantly washing clothes in the public tanks, and in every stream and ditch, that one cannot help wondering, in the midst of all this dirt, who wears them when they are clean. The custom is to lay the wet linen which is being operated upon, on a smooth stone, and hammer away at it, with a flat wooden mallet. This they do, as furiously as if they were revenging themselves on dress in general for being connected with the Fall of Mankind.

It is not unusual to see, lying on the edge of the tank at these times, or on another flat stone, an unfortunate baby, tightly swathed up, arms and legs and all, in an enormous

quantity of wrapper, so that it is unable to move a toe or finger. This custom (which we often see represented in old pictures) is universal among the common people. A child is left anywhere without the possibility of crawling away, or is accidentally knocked off a shelf, or tumbled out of bed, or is hung up to a hook now and then, and left dangling like a doll at an English rag shop, without the least inconvenience to anybody.

WHEN the better kind of people die, or are at the point of death, their nearest relations generally walk off; retiring into the country for a little change, and leaving the body to be disposed of, without any superintendence from them. The procession is usually formed, and the coffin borne, and the funeral conducted, by a body of persons called a *Confraternita*, who, as a kind of voluntary penance, undertake to perform these offices, in regular rotation, for the dead; but who, mingling something of pride with their humility, are dressed in a loose garment covering their whole person, and wear a hood concealing the face; with breathing-holes and apertures for the eyes. The effect of this costume is very ghastly: especially in the case of a certain Blue *Confraternita* belonging to Genoa, who, to say the least of them, are very ugly customers, and who look—suddenly encountered in their pious ministration in the streets—as if they were Ghoules or Demons, bearing off the body for themselves.

FROM GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

“THIS is my birthday, Pip.”
I was going to wish her many happy returns, when she lifted her stick.

“I don’t suffer it to be spoken of. I don’t suffer those who were here just now, or any one to speak of it. They come here on the day, but they dare not refer to it.”

Of course *I* made no further efforts to refer to it.

“On this day of the year, long before you were born, this heap of decay,” stabbing with her crutched stick at the pile of cobwebs on the table but not touching it, “was brought here. It and I have worn away together. The mice have gnawed at it, and sharper teeth than teeth of mice have gnawed at me.”

She held the head of her stick against her heart as she stood looking at the table ; she in her once white dress, all yellow and withered ; the once white cloth all yellow and withered ; everything around, in a state to crumble under a touch.

“When the ruin is complete,” said she, with a ghastly look, “and when they lay me dead, in my bride’s dress on the bride’s table—which shall be done, and which will be the finished curse upon him—so much the better if it is done on this day !”

She stood looking at the table as if she stood looking at her own figure lying there. I remained quiet. Estella returned, and she too remained quiet. It seemed to me that we continued thus a long time. In the heavy air of the room, and the heavy darkness that brooded in its remoter corners, I even had an alarming fancy that Estella and I might presently begin to decay.

LET me introduce the topic, Handel, by mentioning that in London it is not the custom to put the knife in the mouth—for fear of accidents—and that while the fork is reserved for that use, it is not put farther in than necessary. It is scarcely worth mentioning, only it’s as well to do as other people do. Also, the spoon is not generally used over-hand, but under. This has two advantages. You get at your mouth better (which after all is the object), and you save a good deal of the attitude of opening oysters, on the part of the right elbow.”

He offered these friendly suggestions in such a lively way, that we both laughed and I scarcely blushed.

“**H**AVE you seen anything of London, yet?”

“Why, yes, sir,” said Joe, “me and Wopsle went off straight to look at the Blacking Ware’us. But we didn’t find that it come up to its likeness in the red bills at the shop doors ; which I meanter say,” added Joe, in an explanatory manner, “as it is there drawd too architectooralooral.”

I ASKED Joe whether he had heard if any of the other relations had any legacies?

“Miss Sarah,” said Joe, “she have twenty-five pound per annum fur to buy pills, on account of being bilious. Miss Georgiana, she have twenty pound down. Mrs. —— what’s the name of them wild beasts with humps, old chap?”

“Camels?” said I, wondering what he could possibly want to know.

Joe nodded. “Mrs. Camels,” by which I presently understood he meant Camilla, “she have five pound fur to buy rushlights to put her in spirits when she wake up in the night.”

“**P**IP, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, as I may say, and one man’s a blacksmith, and one’s a whitesmith, and one’s a goldsmith, and one’s a coppersmith. Divisions among such must come, and must be met as they come. If there’s been any fault at all to-day, it’s mine. You and me is not two figures to be together in London ; nor yet anywheres else but what is private, and beknown, and understood among friends. It ain’t that I am proud, but that I want to be right, as you shall never see me no more in these clothes. I’m wrong in these clothes. I’m wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off th’ meshes. You

won't find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge dress, with my hammer in my hand, or even my pipe. You won't find half so much fault in me if, supposing as you should ever wish to see me, you come and put your head in at the forge window and see Joe the blacksmith, there, at the old anvil, in the old burnt apron, sticking to the old work. I'm awful dull, but I hope I've beat out something nigh the rights of this at last. And so God bless you, dear old Pip, old chap, God bless you !”

I had not been mistaken in my fancy that there was a simple dignity in him. The fashion of his dress could no more come in its way when he spoke these words, than it could come in its way in Heaven. He touched me gently on the forehead and went out. As soon as I could recover myself sufficiently, I hurried out after him and looked for him in the neighboring streets ; but he was gone.

DESCRIPTIONS OF PERSONS AND THINGS,
TOGETHER WITH INCIDENTS
IN AMERICA.



CHAPTER IX.

FROM MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

AN American gentleman in the after-cabin, who had been wrapped up in fur and oil-skin the whole passage, unexpectedly appeared in a very shiny, tall, black hat, and constantly overhauled a very little valise of pale leather, which contained his clothes, linen, brushes, shaving apparatus, books, trinkets, and other baggage. He likewise stuck his hands deep into his pockets, and walked the deck with his nostrils dilated, as already inhaling the air of Freedom which carries death to all tyrants, and can never (under any circumstances worth mentioning) be breathed by slaves. An English gentleman who was strongly suspected of having run away from a bank, with something in his possession belonging to its strong-box besides the key, grew eloquent upon the subject of the rights of man, and hummed the Marseillaise Hymn constantly. In a word, one great sensation pervaded the whole ship, and the soil of America lay close before them: so close at last, that, upon a certain starlight night, they took a pilot on board, and within a few hours afterwards lay to until the morning, awaiting the arrival of a steam-boat in which the passengers were to be conveyed ashore.

Off she came, soon after it was light next morning, and lying alongside an hour or more—during which period her very firemen were objects of hardly less interest and curiosity, than if they had been so many angels, good or bad—took all her liv-

ing freight aboard. Among them, Mark, who still had his friend and her three children under his close protection ; and Martin, who had once more dressed himself in his usual attire, but wore a soiled, old cloak above his ordinary clothes, until such time as he should separate forever from his late companions.

The steamer—which, with its machinery on deck, looked, as it worked its long slim legs, like some enormously magnified insect or antediluvian monster—dashed at great speed up a beautiful bay ; and presently they saw some heights, and islands, and a long, flat, straggling city.

“And this,” said Mr. Tapley, looking far ahead, “is the Land of Liberty, is it? Very well. I’m agreeable. Any land will do for me, after so much water !”

MARTIN was not long in determining within himself that this must be Colonel Diver’s son ; the hope of the family, and future mainspring of the Rowdy Journal. Indeed he had begun to say that he presumed this was the colonel’s little boy, and that it was very pleasant to see him playing at Editor in all the guilelessness of childhood, when the colonel proudly interposed and said :

“My War Correspondent, sir. Mr. Jefferson Brick !”

Martin could not help starting at this unexpected announcement, and the consciousness of the irretrievable mistake he had nearly made.

Mr. Brick seemed pleased with the sensation he produced upon the stranger, and shook hands with him, with an air of patronage designed to reassure him, and to let him know that there was no occasion to be frightened, for he (Brick) wouldn’t hurt him.

“You have heard of Jefferson Brick, I see, sir,” quoth the colonel, with a smile. “England has heard of Jefferson Brick. Europe has heard of Jefferson Brick. Let me see. When did you leave England, sir ?”

“Five weeks ago,” said Martin.

“Five weeks ago,” repeated the colonel, thoughtfully, as he

took his seat upon the table, and swung his legs. "Now let me ask you, sir, which of Mr. Brick's articles had become at that time the most obnoxious to the British Parliament and the Court of Saint James's?"

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I—"

"I have reason to know, sir," interrupted the colonel, "that the aristocratic circles of your country quail before the name of Jefferson Brick. I should like to be informed, sir, from your lips, which of his sentiments has struck the deadliest blow—"

"At the hundred heads of the Hydra of Corruption now grovelling in the dust beneath the lance of Reason, and spouting up to the universal arch above us, its sanguinary gore," said Mr. Brick, putting on a little blue cloth cap with a glazed front, and quoting his last article.

"The libation of freedom, Brick," hinted the colonel.

"Must sometimes be quaffed in blood, colonel," cried Brick. And when he said "blood," he gave the great pair of scissors a sharp snap, as if *they* said blood too, and were quite of his opinion.

This done they both looked at Martin, pausing for a reply.

"Upon my life," said Martin, who had by this time quite recovered his usual coolness, "I can't give you any satisfactory information about it; for the truth is that I—"

"Stop!" cried the colonel, glancing sternly at his war correspondent, and giving his head one shake after every sentence. "That you never heard of Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never read Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never saw the Rowdy Journal, sir. That you never knew, sir, of its mighty influence upon the cabinets of Eu—rope. Yes?"

"That's what I was about to observe, certainly," said Martin.

"Keep cool, Jefferson," said the colonel gravely. "Don't bust! oh you Europeans! Arter that, let's have a glass of wine!" So saying, he got down from the table, and produced, from a basket outside the door, a bottle of champagne, and three glasses.

"Mr. Jefferson Brick, sir," said the colonel, filling Martin's

glass and his own, and pushing the bottle to that gentleman, "will give us a sentiment."

"Well, sir!" cried the war correspondent, "since you have concluded to call upon me, I will respond. I will give you, sir, The Rowdy Journal and its brethren; the well of Truth, whose waters are black from being composed of printers' ink, but are quite clear enough for my country to behold the shadow of her Destiny reflected in."

"Hear, hear!" cried the colonel, with great complacency. "There are flowery components, sir, in the language of my friend?"

"IS the major in-doors?" inquired the colonel, as he entered.

"Is it the master, sir?" returned the girl, with a hesitation which seemed to imply that they were rather flush of majors in that establishment.

"The master!" said Colonel Diver, stopping short and looking round at his war correspondent.

"Oh! The depressing institutions of that British empire, colonel!" said Jefferson Brick. "Master!"

"What's the matter with the word?" asked Martin.

"I should hope it was never heard in our country, sir; that's all," said Jefferson Brick: "except when it is used by some degraded Help, as new to the blessings of our form of government, as this Help is. There are no masters here."

"All 'owners,' are they?" said Martin.

Mr. Jefferson Brick followed in the Rowdy Journal's footsteps without returning any answer. Martin took the same course, thinking as he went, that perhaps the free and independent citizens, who in their moral elevation owned the colonel for their master, might render better homage to the goddess, Liberty, in nightly dreams upon the oven of a Russian Serf.

"YOU have come to visit our country, sir, at a season of great commercial depression," said the major.

"At an alarming crisis," said the colonel.

"At a period of unprecedented stagnation," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"I am sorry to hear that," returned Martin. "It's not likely to last, I hope?"

Martin knew nothing about America, or he would have known perfectly well that if its individual citizens, to a man, are to be believed, it always *is* depressed, and always *is* stagnated, and always *is* at an alarming crisis, and never was otherwise; though as a body they are ready to make oath upon the Evangelists at any hour of the day or night, that it is the most thriving and prosperous of all countries on the habitable globe.

"It's not likely to last, I hope?" said Martin.

"Well!" returned the major, "I expect we shall get along somehow, and come right in the end."

"We are an elastic country," said the Rowdy Journal.

"We are a young lion," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"We have revivifying and vigorous principles within ourselves," observed the major. "Shall we drink a bitter afore dinner, colonel?"

WHEN the major rose from his rocking-chair before the stove and so disturbed the hot air and balmy whiff of soup which fanned their brows, the odor of stale tobacco became so decidedly prevalent as to leave no doubt of its proceeding mainly from that gentleman's attire. Indeed, as Martin walked behind him to the bar-room, he could not help thinking that the great square major, in his listlessness and languor, looked very much like a stale weed himself: such as might be hoed out of the public garden, with great advantage to the decent growth of that preserve, and tossed on some congenial dunghill.

WHEN the colonel had finished his dinner, which event took place while Martin, who had sent his plate for some turkey, was waiting to begin, he asked him what he

thought of the boarders, who were from all parts of the Union, and whether he would like to know any particulars concerning them.

"Pray," said Martin, "who is that sickly little girl opposite, with the tight round eyes? I don't see anybody here, who looks like her mother, or who seems to have charge of her."

"Do you mean the matron in blue, sir?" asked the colonel, with emphasis. "That is Mrs. Jefferson Brick, sir."

"No, no," said Martin, "I mean the little girl, like a doll; directly opposite."

"Well, sir!" cried the colonel. "*That* is Mrs. Jefferson Brick."

Martin glanced at the colonel's face, but he was quite serious.

"Bless my soul! I suppose there will be a young Brick then, one of these days?" said Martin.

"There are two young Bricks already, sir," returned the colonel.

The matron looked so uncommonly like a child herself, that Martin could not help saying as much. "Yes, sir," returned the colonel, "but some institutions develop human nature: others re—tard it."

"Jefferson Brick," he observed, after a short silence, in commendation of his correspondent, "is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

IT was rather barren of interest, to say the truth; and the greater part of it may be summed up in one word. Dollars. All their cares, hopes, joys, affections, virtues, and associations, seemed to be melted down into dollars. Whatever the chance contributions that fell into the slow caldron of their talk, they made the gruel thick and slab with dollars. Men were weighed by their dollars, measures gauged by their dollars; life was auctioneered, appraised, put up, and knocked down for its dollars. The next respectable thing to dollars was

any venture having their attainment for its end. The more of that worthless ballast, honor and fair-dealing, which any man cast overboard from the ship of his Good Name and Good Intent, the more ample stowage-room he had for dollars. Make commerce one huge lie and mighty theft. Deface the banner of the nation for an idle rag; pollute it star by star; and cut out stripe by stripe as from the arm of a degraded soldier. Do anything for dollars! What is a flag to *them*!

One who rides at all hazards of limb and life in the chase of a fox, will prefer to ride recklessly at most times. So it was with these gentlemen. He was the greatest patriot, in their eyes, who brawled the loudest, and who cared the least for decency. He was their champion, who in the brutal fury of his own pursuit, could cast no stigma upon them, for the hot knavery of theirs. Thus, Martin learned in the five minutes' straggling talk about the stove, that to carry pistols into legislative assemblies, and swords in sticks, and other such peaceful toys; to seize opponents by the throat, as dogs or rats might do; to bluster, bully, and overbear by personal assailment; were glowing deeds. Not thrusts and stabs at Freedom, striking far deeper into her House of Life than any sultan's scimitar could reach; but rare incense on her altars, having a grateful scent in patriotic nostrils, and curling upward to the seventh heaven of Fame.

“**A**ND may I ask,” said Martin, glancing, but not with any displeasure, from Mark to the negro, “who this gentleman is? Another friend of yours!”

“Why, sir,” returned Mark, taking him aside, and speaking confidentially in his ear, “he’s a man of color, sir!”

“Do you take me for a blind man,” asked Martin, somewhat impatiently, “that you think it necessary to tell me that, when his face is the blackest that ever was seen?”

“No, no; when I say a man of color,” returned Mark, “I mean that he’s been one of them as there’s picters of in the

shops. A man and a brother, you know, sir," said Mr. Tapley, favoring his master with a significant indication of the figure so often represented in tracts and cheap prints.

"A slave!" asked Martin, in a whisper.

"Ah!" said Mark, in the same tone. "Nothing else. A slave. Why, when that there man was young—don't look at him, while I'm a-telling it—he was shot in the leg; gashed in the arm; scored in his live limbs, like crimped fish; beaten out of shape; had his neck galled with an iron collar, and wore iron rings upon his wrists and ankles. The marks are on him to this day. When I was having my dinner just now, he stripped off his coat, and took away my appetite."

"**I** WISH you would pull off my boots for me," said Martin, dropping into one of the chairs. "I am quite knocked up. Dead beat, Mark."

"You won't say that to-morrow morning, sir," returned Mr. Tapley; "nor even to-night, sir, when you've made a trial of this." With which he produced a very large tumbler, piled up to the brim with little blocks of clear transparent ice, through which one or two thin slices of lemon, and a golden liquid of delicious appearance, appealed from the still depths below, to the loving eye of the spectator.

"What do you call this?" said Martin.

But Mr. Tapley made no answer: merely plunging a reed into the mixture—which caused a pleasant commotion among the pieces of ice—and signifying by an expressive gesture that it was to be pumped up through that agency by the enraptured drinker.

Martin took the glass, with an astonished look; applied his lips to the reed; and cast up his eyes once in ecstasy. He paused no more until the goblet was drained to the last drop.

"There, sir," said Mark, taking it from him with a triumphant face; "if ever you should happen to be dead beat again, when I ain't in the way, all you've got to do is, to ask the nearest man to go and fetch a cobbler."

“To go and fetch a cobbler?” repeated Martin.

“This wonderful invention, sir,” said Mark, tenderly patting the empty glass, “is called a cobbler. Sherry cobbler when you name it long; cobbler, when you name it short. Now you’re equal to having your boots taken off, and are, in every particular worth mentioning, another man.”

Having delivered himself of this solemn preface, he brought the boot-jack.

“Mind! I am not going to relapse, Mark,” said Martin; “but, good Heaven, if we should be left in some wild part of this country without goods or money!”

“Well, sir!” replied the imperturbable Tapley; “from what we’ve seen already, I don’t know whether, under those circumstances, we shouldn’t do better in the wild parts than in the tame ones.”

HOW the wheels clank and rattle, and the tramroad shakes as the train rushes on! And now the engine yells, as it were lashed and tortured like a living laborer, and writhed in agony. A poor fancy; for steel and iron are of infinitely greater account, in this commonwealth, than flesh and blood. If the cunning work of man be urged beyond its power of endurance, it has within it the elements of its own revenge; whereas the wretched mechanism of the Divine Hand is dangerous with no such property, but may be tampered with, and crushed, and broken, at the driver’s pleasure. Look at that engine! It shall cost a man more dollars in the way of penalty and fine, and satisfaction of the outraged law, to deface in wantonness that senseless mass of metal, than to take the lives of twenty human creatures. Thus the stars wink upon the bloody stripes; and Liberty pulls down her cap upon her eyes, and owns Oppression in its vilest aspect, for her sister.

The engine-driver of the train whose noise awoke us to the present chapter, was certainly troubled with no such reflections as these; nor is it very probable that his mind was dis-

turbed by any reflections at all. He leaned with folded arms and crossed legs against the side of the carriage, smoking ; and, except when he expressed, by a grunt as short as his pipe, his approval of some particularly dexterous aim on the part of his colleague, the fireman, who beguiled his leisure by throwing logs of wood from the tender at the numerous stray cattle on the line, he preserved a composure so immovable, and an indifference so complete, that if the locomotive had been a sucking-pig, he could not have been more perfectly indifferent to its doings. Notwithstanding the tranquil state of this officer, and his unbroken peace of mind, the train was proceeding with tolerable rapidity ; and the rails being but poorly laid, the jolts and bumps it met with in its progress were neither slight nor few.

THEY came to their journey's end late in the evening. Close to the railway was an immense white edifice, like an ugly hospital, on which was painted "NATIONAL HOTEL." There was a wooden gallery or verandah in front, in which it was rather startling, when the train stopped, to behold a great many pairs of boots and shoes, and the smoke of a great many cigars, but no other evidences of human habitation. By slow degrees however, some heads and shoulders appeared, and connecting themselves with the boots and shoes, led to the discovery that certain gentlemen boarders, who had a fancy for putting their heels where the gentlemen boarders in other countries usually put their heads, were enjoying themselves after their own manner in the cool of the evening.

IT was a small place : something like a turnpike. But a great deal of land may be got into a dice-box, and why may not a whole territory be bargained for in a shed ? It was but a temporary office too ; for the Edeners were "going" to build a superb establishment for the transaction of their business, and

had already got so far as to mark out the site. Which is a great way in America. The office-door was wide open, and in the doorway was the agent: no doubt a tremendous fellow to get through his work, for he seemed to have no arrears, but was swinging backwards and forwards in a rocking-chair, with one of his legs planted high up against the door-post, and the other doubled up under him, as if he were hatching his foot.

He was a gaunt man in a huge straw hat, and a coat of green stuff. The weather being hot, he had no cravat, and wore his shirt collar wide open; so that every time he spoke something was seen to twitch and jerk up in his throat, like the little hammers in a harpsichord when the notes are struck. Perhaps it was the Truth feebly endeavoring to leap to his lips. If so, it never reached them.

Two gray eyes lurked deep within this agent's head, but one of them had no sight in it, and stood stock-still. With that side of his face he seemed to listen to what the other side was doing. Thus each profile had a distinct expression; and when the movable side was most in action, the rigid one was in its coldest state of watchfulness. It was like turning the man inside out, to pass to that view of his features in his liveliest mood, and see how calculating and intent they were.

Each long black hair upon his head hung down as straight as any plummet line; but rumpled tufts were on the arches of his eyes, as if the crow whose foot was deeply printed in the corners, had pecked and torn them in a savage recognition of his kindred nature as a bird of prey.

“**W**ELL, sir!” he said, as he shook hands with Martin, “here is a spectacle calc’lated to make the British Lion put his tail between his legs, and howl with anguish, I expect!”

Martin certainly thought it possible that the British Lion might have been rather out of his element in that Ark; but he kept the idea to himself. The General was then voted to the

chair, on the motion of a pallid lad of the Jefferson Brick school: who forthwith set in for a high-spiced speech, with a good deal about hearths and homes in it and unriveting the chains of Tyranny.

Oh but it was a clincher for the British Lion, it was! The indignation of the glowing young Columbian knew no bounds. If he could only have been one of his own forefathers, he said, wouldn't he have peppered that same Lion, and been to him as another Brute Tamer with a wire whip, teaching him lessons not easily forgotten. "Lion! (cried the young Columbian) where is he? Who is he? What is he? Show him to me. Let me have him here. Here!" said the young Columbian, in a wrestling attitude, "upon this sacred altar. Here!" cried the young Columbian, idealizing the dining-table, "upon ancestral ashes, cemented with the glorious blood poured out like water on our native plains of Chickabiddy Lick! Bring forth that Lion!" said the young Columbian. "Alone, I dare him! I taunt that Lion. I tell that Lion, that Freedom's hand once twisted in his mane, he rolls a corse before me, and the Eagles of the Great Republic laugh ha, ha!"

When it was found that the Lion didn't come, but kept out of the way; that the young Columbian stood there, with folded arms, alone in his glory; and consequently that the Eagles were no doubt laughing wildly on the mountain tops; such cheers arose as might have shaken the hands upon the Horse-Guards clock, and changed the very mean time of the day in England's capital.

PUNCTUALLY, as the hour struck, Captain Kedgick returned to hand him to the room of state; and he had no sooner got him safe there, than he bawled down the staircase to his fellow-citizens below, that Mr. Chuzzlewit was "receiving."

Up they came with a rush. Up they came until the room was full, and, through the open door, a dismal perspective of

more to come, was shown upon the stairs. One after another, one after another, dozen after dozen, score after score, more, more, more, up they came: all shaking hands with Martin. Such varieties of hands, the thick, the thin, the short, the long, the fat, the lean, the coarse, the fine; such differences of temperature, the hot, the cold, the dry, the moist, the flabby; such diversities of grasp, the tight, the loose, the short-lived, and the lingering! Still up, up, up, more, more, more: and ever and anon the Captain's voice was heard above the crowd: "There's more below! there's more below. Now, gentlemen, you that have been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, will you clear, gentlemen? Will you clear? Will you be so good as clear, gentlemen, and make a little room for more?"

Regardless of the Captain's cries, they didn't clear at all, but stood there, bolt upright and staring. Two gentlemen connected with the Watertoast Gazette had come express to get the matter for an article on Martin. They had agreed to divide the labor. One of them took him below the waistcoat; one above. Each stood directly in front of his subject with his head a little on one side, intent on his department. If Martin put one boot before the other, the lower gentleman was down upon him; he rubbed a pimple on his nose, and the upper gentleman booked it. He opened his mouth to speak, and the same gentleman was on one knee before him, looking in at his teeth, with the nice scrutiny of a dentist. Amateurs in the physiognomical and phrenological sciences roved about him with watchful eyes and itching fingers, and sometimes one, more daring than the rest, made a mad grasp at the back of his head, and vanished in the crowd. They had him in all points of view: in front, in profile, three-quarter face, and behind. Those who were not professional or scientific, audibly exchanged opinions on his looks. New lights shone in upon him, in respect of his nose. Contradictory rumors were abroad on the subject of his hair. And still the Captain's voice was heard—so stifled by the concourse, that he seemed to speak from underneath a feather-bed, exclaiming, "Gentle-

men, you that have been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, *will* you clear?"

Even when they began to clear, it was no better : for then a stream of gentlemen, every one with a lady on each arm (exactly like the chorus to the National Anthem when Royalty goes in state to the play), came gliding in : every new group fresher than the last, and bent on staying to the latest moment. If they spoke to him, which was not often, they invariably asked the same questions, in the same tone : with no more remorse, or delicacy, or consideration, than if he had been a figure of stone, purchased, and paid for, and set up there, for their delight. Even when, in the slow course of time, these died off, it was as bad as ever, if not worse ; for then the boys grew bold, and came in as a class of themselves, and did everything that the grown-up people had done. Uncouth stragglers too, appeared ; men of a ghostly kind, who being in, didn't know how to get out again : insomuch that one silent gentleman with glazed and fishy eyes, and only one button on his waistcoat (which was a very large metal one, and shone prodigiously), got behind the door, and stood there, like a clock, long after everybody else was gone.

MARTIN handed her to a chair. Her first words arrested him before he could get back to his own seat.

"Pray, sir !" said Mrs. Hominy, "where do you hail from?"

"I am afraid I am dull of comprehension," answered Martin, "being extremely tired ; but, upon my word, I don't understand you."

Mrs. Hominy shook her head with a melancholy smile that said, not inexpressively, "They corrupt even the language in that old country !" and added then, as coming down a step or two to meet his low capacity, "Where was you rose?"

"Oh !" said Martin, "I was born in Kent."

"And how do you like our country, sir?" asked Mrs. Hominy.

"Very much indeed," said Martin, half asleep. "At least—that is—pretty well, ma'am."

"Most strangers—and partick'larly Britishers—are much surprised by what they see in the U-nited States," remarked Mrs. Hominy.

"They have excellent reason to be so, ma'am," said Martin. "I never was so much surprised in all my life."

"Our institutions make our people smart much, sir," Mrs. Hominy remarked.

"The most short-sighted man could see that at a glance, with his naked eye," said Martin.

Mrs. Hominy was a philosopher and an authoress, and consequently had a pretty strong digestion ; but this coarse, this indecorous phrase, was almost too much for her. For a gentleman sitting alone with a lady—although the door *was* open—to talk about a naked eye !

"**L**IVE!" cried Martin. "Yes, it's easy to say live ; but if we should happen not to wake when rattlesnakes are making corkscrews of themselves upon our beds, it may be not so easy to do it."

"And that's a fact," said a voice so close in his ear that it tickled him. "That's dreadful true."

Martin looked round, and found that a gentleman, on the seat behind, had thrust his head between himself and Mark, and sat with his chin resting on the back rail of their little bench entertaining himself with their conversation. He was as languid and listless in his looks, as most of the gentlemen they had seen ; his cheeks were so hollow that he seemed to be always sucking them in ; and the sun had burnt him, not a wholesome red or brown, but dirty yellow. He had bright dark eyes, which he kept half closed : only peeping out of the corners, and even then with a glance that seemed to say, "Now you won't overreach me ; you want to, but you won't." His arms rested carelessly on his knees as he leant forward ; in the palm of his left hand, as English rustics have their slice of cheese,

he had a cake of tobacco ; in his right a penknife. He struck into the dialogue with as little reserve as if he had been specially called in, days before, to hear the arguments on both sides, and favor them with his opinion ; and he no more contemplated or cared for the possibility of their not desiring the honor of his acquaintance or interference in their private affairs, than if he had been a bear or a buffalo.

“That,” he repeated, nodding condescendingly to Martin, as to an outer barbarian and foreigner, “is dreadful true. Darn all manner of vermin.”

Martin could not help frowning for a moment, as if he were disposed to insinuate that the gentleman had unconsciously “darned” himself. But remembering the wisdom of doing at Rome as Romans do, he smiled with the pleasantest expression he could assume upon so short a notice.

Their new friend said no more just then, being busily employed in cutting a quid or plug from his cake of tobacco, and whistling softly to himself the while. When he had shaped it to his liking, he took out his old plug, and deposited the same on the back of the seat between Mark and Martin, while he thrust the new one into the hollow of his cheek, where it looked like a large walnut, or tolerable pippin. Finding it quite satisfactory, he struck the point of his knife into the old plug, and holding it out for their inspection, remarked with the air of a man who had not lived in vain, that it was “used up considerable.” Then he tossed it away ; put his knife into one pocket and his tobacco into another ; rested his chin upon the rail as before ; and approving of the pattern on Martin’s waistcoat, reached out his hand to feel the texture of that garment.

“What do you call this now ?” he asked.

“Upon my word,” said Martin, “I don’t know what it’s called.”

“It’ll cost a dollar or more a yard, I reckon ?”

“I really don’t know.”

“In my country,” said the gentleman, “we know the cost of our own prō-dūce.”

Martin not discussing the question, there was a pause.

"Well!" resumed their new friend, after staring at them intently during the whole interval of silence: "how's the un-nat'ral old parent by this time?"

Mr. Tapley regarding this inquiry as only another version of the impertinent English question, "How's your mother?" would have resented it instantly, but for Martin's prompt interposition.

"You mean the old country?" he said.

"Ah!" was the reply, "How's she? Progressing back'ards, I expect, as usual? Well! How's Queen Victoria?"

"In good health, I believe," said Martin.

"Queen Victoria won't shake in her royal shoes at all, when she hears to-morrow named," observed the stranger. "No."

"Not that I am aware of. Why should she?"

"She won't be taken with a cold chill when she realizes what is being done in these diggings," said the stranger. "No."

"No," said Martin. "I think I could take my oath of that."

The strange gentleman looked at him as if in pity for his ignorance or prejudice, and said:

"Well, sir, I tell you this—there ain't a ěn-gĭne with its biler bust, in God A'mighty's free U-nited States, so fixed, and nipped, and frizzled to a most e-tarnal smash, as that young critter, in her luxurious location in the Tower of London, will be, when she reads the next double-extra Watertoast Gazette."

Several other gentlemen had left their seats and gathered round during the foregoing dialogue. They were highly delighted with this speech. One very lank gentleman, in a loose limp white cravat, a long white waistcoat, and a black great-coat, who seemed to be in authority among them, felt called upon to acknowledge it.

"Hem! Mr. La Fayette Kettle," he said, taking off his hat.

There was a grave murmur of "Hush!"

"Mr. La Fayette Kettle! Sir!"

Mr. Kettle bowed.

“In the name of this company, sir, and in the name of our common country, and in the name of that righteous cause of holy sympathy in which we are engaged, I thank you. I thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast Sympathizers; and I thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast Gazette; and I thank you, sir, in the name of the star-spangled banner of the Great United States, for your eloquent and categorical exposition. And if, sir,” said the speaker, poking Martin with the handle of his umbrella to bespeak his attention, for he was listening to a whisper from Mark; “if, sir, in such a place, and at such time, I might venture to con-clude with a sentiment, glancing—however slantin’dicularly—at the subject in hand, I would say, sir, may the British Lion have his talons eradicated by the noble bill of the American Eagle, and be taught to play upon the Irish Harp and the Scotch Fiddle that music which is breathed in every empty shell that lies upon the shores of green Co-lumbia!”

Here the lank gentleman sat down again, amidst a great sensation, and every one looked very grave.

MR. CHOLLOP was, of course, one of the most remarkable men in the country; but he really was a notorious person besides. He was usually described by his friends, in the South and West, as “a splendid sample of our na-tive raw material, sir,” and was much esteemed for his devotion to rational Liberty; for the better propagation whereof he usually carried a brace of revolving pistols in his coat pocket, with seven barrels a-piece. He also carried, amongst other trinkets, a sword-stick, which he called his “Tickler;” and a great knife, which (for he was a man of a pleasant turn of humor) he called “Ripper,” in allusion to its usefulness as a means of ventilating the stomach of any adversary in a close contest. He had used these weapons with distinguished effect in several instances, all duly chronicled in the newspapers; and was greatly beloved for the gallant manner in which he had

“jobbed out” the eye of one gentleman, as he was in the act of knocking at his own street-door.

Mr. Chollop was a man of a roving disposition ; and, in any less advanced community, might have been mistaken for a violent vagabond. But his fine qualities being perfectly understood and appreciated in those regions where his lot was cast, and where he had many kindred spirits to consort with, he may be regarded as having been born under a fortunate star, which is not always the case with a man so much before the age in which he lives. Preferring, with a view to the gratification of his tickling and ripping fancies, to dwell upon the outskirts of society, and in the more remote towns and cities, he was in the habit of emigrating from place to place, and establishing in each some business—usually a newspaper—which he presently sold : for the most part closing the bargain by challenging, stabbing, pistolling, or gouging, the new editor, before he had quite taken possession of the property.

He had come to Eden on a speculation of this kind, but had abandoned it, and was about to leave. He always introduced himself to strangers as a worshipper of Freedom ; was the consistent advocate of Lynch law, and slavery ; and invariably recommended, both in print and speech, the “tarring and feathering” of any unpopular person who differed from himself. He called this “planting the standard of civilization in the wilder gardens of My country.”

“**W**HAT an extraordinary people you are !” cried Martin. “Are Mr. Chollop and the class he represents an Institution here ? Are pistols, with revolving barrels, sword-sticks, bowie-knives, and such things, Institutions on which you pride yourselves ? Are bloody duels, brutal combats, savage assaults, shooting down and stabbing in the streets, your Institutions ? Why I shall hear next, that Dishonor and Fraud are among the Institutions of the great republic !”

The moment the words passed his lips, the Honorable Elijah Pogram looked round again.

"This morbid hatred of our Institutions," he observed, "is quite a study for the psychological observer. He's alludin to Repudiation now!"

"Oh! You may make anything an Institution if you like," said Martin, laughing, "and I confess you had me there, for you certainly have made that, one. But the greater part of these things are one Institution with us, and we call it by the generic name of Old Bailey!"

The bell being rung for dinner at this moment, everybody ran away into the cabin, whither the Honorable Elijah Pogram fled with such precipitation that he forgot his umbrella was up, and fixed it so tightly in the cabin door that it could neither be let down nor got out. For a minute or so this accident created a perfect rebellion among the hungry passengers behind, who, seeing the dishes, and hearing the knives and forks at work, well knew what would happen unless they got there instantly, and were nearly mad; while several virtuous citizens at the table were in deadly peril of choking themselves in their unnatural efforts to get rid of all the meat before these others came.

"**W**HY, Cook? what are you thinking of so steadily?" said Martin.

"Why I was a-thinking, sir," returned Mark, "that if I was a painter and was called upon to paint the American Eagle, how should I do it?"

"Paint it as like an Eagle as you could, I suppose?"

"No," said Mark. "That wouldn't do for me, sir. I should want to draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness; like a Bantam, for its bragging; like a Magpie, for its honesty; like a Peacock, for its vanity; like a Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud, and thinking nobody sees it—"

"And like a Phoenix, for its power of springing from the ashes of its faults and vices, and soaring up anew into the sky!" said Martin. "Well, Mark. Let us hope so."

FROM AMERICAN NOTES.

WHATEVER the defects of American universities may be, they disseminate no prejudices ; rear no bigots ; dig up the buried ashes of no old superstitions ; never interpose between the people and their improvement ; exclude no man because of his religious opinions ; above all, in their whole course of study and instruction, recognize a world, and a broad one, too, lying beyond the college walls.

THE maxim, that out of evil cometh good, is strongly illustrated by these establishments at home, as the records of the Prerogative Office in Doctors' Commons can abundantly prove. Some immensely rich old gentleman or lady, surrounded by needy relatives, makes, upon a low average, a will a week. The old gentleman or lady, never very remarkable in the best of times for good temper, is full of aches and pains from head to foot, full of fancies and caprices, full of spleen, distrust, suspicion, and dislike. To cancel old wills, and invent new ones, is at last the sole business of such a testator's existence ; and relations and friends (some of whom have been bred up distinctly to inherit a large share of the property, and have been, from their cradles, specially disqualified from devoting themselves to any useful pursuit, on that account) are so often and so unexpectedly and summarily cut off, and reinstated, and cut off again, that the whole family, down to the remotest cousin, is kept in a perpetual fever. At length it becomes plain that the old lady or gentleman has not long to live ; and the plainer this becomes, the more clearly the old lady or gentleman perceives that everybody is in a conspiracy against their poor old dying relative ; wherefore the old lady or gentleman makes another last will—positively the last this time—conceals the same in a china teapot, and expires next day. Then it turns out that the whole of the real and personal estate is divided

between half-a-dozen charities, and that the dead and gone testator has in pure spite helped to do a great deal of good at the cost of an immense amount of evil passion and misery.

THE thought occurred to me as I sat down in another room before a girl, blind, deaf, and dumb, destitute of smell, and nearly so of taste,—before a fair young creature with every human faculty and hope and power of goodness and affection enclosed within her delicate frame, and but one outward sense,—the sense of touch. There she was before me ; built up, as it were, in a marble cell, impervious to any ray of light or particle of sound ; with her poor white hand peeping through a chink in the wall, beckoning to some good man for help, that an immortal soul might be awakened.

Long before I looked upon her, the help had come. Her face was radiant with intelligence and pleasure. Her hair, braided by her own hands, was bound about a head whose intellectual capacity and development were beautifully expressed in its graceful outline and its broad open brow ; her dress, arranged by herself, was a pattern of neatness and simplicity ; the work she had knitted lay beside her ; her writing-book was on the desk she leaned upon. From the mournful ruin of such bereavement there had slowly risen up this gentle, tender, guileless, grateful-hearted being.

Like other inmates of that house, she had a green ribbon bound round her eyelids. A doll she had dressed lay near upon the ground. I took it up, and saw, that she had made a green fillet such as she wore herself, and fastened it about its mimic eyes.

She was seated in a little enclosure made by school-desks and forms, writing her daily journal. But soon finishing this pursuit, she engaged in an animated communication with a teacher who sat beside her. This was a favorite mistress with the poor pupil. If she could see the face of her fair instructress, she would not love her less, I am sure.

I have extracted a few disjointed fragments of her history from an account written by that one man who has made her what she is. It is a very beautiful and touching narrative; and I wish I could present it entire.

Her name is Laura Bridgman. "She was born in Hanover, New Hampshire, on the 21st of December, 1829. She is described as having been a very sprightly and pretty infant, with bright blue eyes. She was, however, so puny and feeble until she was a year and a half old, that her parents hardly hoped to rear her. She was subject to severe fits, which seemed to rack her frame almost beyond her power of endurance, and life was held by the feeblest tenure; but when a year and a half old, she seemed to rally; the dangerous symptoms subsided; and at twenty months old, she was perfectly well.

"Then her mental powers, hitherto stunted in their growth, rapidly developed themselves; and during the four months of health which she enjoyed, she appears (making due allowance for a fond mother's account) to have displayed a considerable degree of intelligence.

"But suddenly she sickened again: her disease raged with great violence during five weeks, when her eyes and ears were inflamed, suppurated, and their contents were discharged. But though sight and hearing were gone forever, the poor child's sufferings were not ended. The fever raged during seven weeks; for five months she was kept in bed in a darkened room; it was a year before she could walk unsupported, and two years before she could sit up all day. It was now observed that her sense of smell was almost entirely destroyed; and consequently that her taste was much blunted.

"It was not until four years of age that the poor child's bodily health seemed restored, and she was able to enter upon her apprenticeship of life and the world.

"But what a situation was hers! The darkness and the silence of the tomb were around her; no mother's smile called forth her answering smile, no father's voice taught her

to imitate his sounds ;—they, brothers and sisters, were but forms of matter which resisted her touch, but which differed not from the furniture of the house, save in warmth, and in the power of locomotion ; and not even in these respects from the dog and the cat.

“But the immortal spirit which had been implanted within her could not die, nor be maimed nor mutilated ; and, though most of its avenues of communication with the world were cut off, it began to manifest itself through the others. As soon as she could walk, she began to explore the room, and then the house ; she became familiar with the form, density, weight, and heat of every article she could lay her hands upon. She followed her mother and felt her hands and arms, as she was occupied about the house ; and her disposition to imitate led her to repeat everything herself. She even learned to sew a little, and to knit.”

The reader will scarcely need to be told, however, that the opportunities of communication with her were very, very limited ; and that the moral effects of her wretched state soon began to appear. Those who cannot be enlightened by reason can only be controlled by force ; and this, coupled with her great privations, must soon have reduced her to a worse condition than that of the beasts that perish, but for timely and unhopèd-for aid.

“At this time I was so fortunate as to hear of the child, and immediately hastened to Hanover to see her. I found her with a well-formed figure ; a strongly marked, nervous-sanguine temperament ; a large and beautifully shaped head ; and the whole system in healthy action. The parents were easily induced to consent to her coming to Boston ; and on the 4th of October, 1837, they brought her to the Institution.

“For a while she was much bewildered ; and after waiting about two weeks, until she became acquainted with her new locality, and somewhat familiar with the inmates, the attempt was made to give her knowledge of arbitrary signs, by which she could interchange thoughts with others.

“There was one of two ways to be adopted,—either to go on to build up a language of signs on the basis of the natural language which she had already commenced herself, or to teach her the purely arbitrary language in common use : that is, to give her a sign for every individual thing, or to give her a knowledge of letters by combination of which she might express her idea of the existence, and the mode and condition of existence, of anything. The former would have been easy, but very ineffectual ; the latter seemed very difficult, but, if accomplished, very effectual. I determined, therefore, to try the latter.

“The first experiments were made by taking articles in common use, such as knives, forks, spoons, keys, etc., and pasting upon them labels with their names printed in raised letters. These she felt very carefully, and soon, of course, distinguished that the crooked lines *spoon* differed as much from the crooked lines *key*, as the spoon differed from the key in form.

“Then small detached labels, with the same words printed upon them, were put into her hands ; and she soon observed that they were similar to the ones pasted on the articles. She showed her perception of this similarity by laying the label *key* upon the key, and the label *spoon* upon the spoon. She was encouraged here by the natural sign of approbation,—patting on the head.

“The same process was then repeated with all the articles which she could handle ; and she very easily learned to place the proper labels upon them. It was evident, however, that the only intellectual exercise was that of imitation and memory. She recollected that the label *book* was placed upon a book, and she repeated the process first from imitation, next from memory, with only the motive of love of approbation, but apparently without the intellectual perception of any relation between the things.

“After a while, instead of labels, the individual letters were given to her on detached bits of paper. They were arranged

side by side so as to spell *book*, *key*, etc. ; then they were mixed up in a heap, and a sign was made for her to arrange them herself, so as to express the words *book*, *key*, etc. ; and she did so.

“Hitherto the process had been mechanical, and the success about as great as teaching a very knowing dog a variety of tricks. The poor child had sat in mute amazement, and patiently imitated everything her teacher did ; but now the truth began to flash upon her ; her intellect began to work ; she perceived that here was a way by which she could herself make up a sign of anything that was in her own mind, and show it to another mind ; and at once her countenance lighted up with a human expression. It was no longer a dog, or parrot : it was an immortal spirit, eagerly seizing upon a new link of union with other spirits ! I could almost fix upon the moment when this truth dawned upon her mind, and spread its light to her countenance ; I saw that the great obstacle was overcome ; and that henceforward nothing but patient and persevering, but plain and straightforward, efforts were to be used.

“The result, thus far, is quickly related, and easily conceived : but not so was the process ; for many weeks of apparently unprofitable labor were passed before it was effected.

“When it was said, above, that a sign was made, it was intended to say that the action was performed by her teacher, she feeling his hands, and then imitating the motion.

“The next step was to procure a set of metal types, with the different letters of the alphabet cast upon their ends ; also a board, in which were square holes, into which holes she could set the types so that the letters on their ends could alone be left above the surface.

“Then, on any article being handed to her,—for instance, a pencil or a watch,—she would select the component letters, and arrange them on her board, and read them with apparent pleasure.

“She was exercised for several weeks in this way, until her

vocabulary became extensive ; and then the important step was taken of teaching her how to represent the different letters by the position of her fingers, instead of the cumbrous apparatus of the board and types. She accomplished this speedily and easily ; for her intellect had begun to work in aid of her teacher, and her progress was rapid.

“This was the period, about three months after she had commenced, that the first report of her case was made, in which it is stated that ‘she has just learned the manual alphabet, as used by the deaf-mutes, and it is a subject of delight and wonder to see how rapidly, correctly, and eagerly she goes on with her labors. Her teacher gives her a new object,—for instance, a pencil,—first lets her examine it, and get an idea of its use, then teaches her how to spell it by making the signs for the letters with her own fingers ; the child grasps her hand, and feels her fingers, as the different letters are formed ; she turns her head a little on one side, like a person listening closely ; her lips are apart ; she seems scarcely to breathe ; and her countenance, at first anxious, gradually changes to a smile, as she comprehends the lesson. She then holds up her tiny fingers, and spells the word in the manual alphabet ; next, she takes her types and arranges her letters ; and last, to make sure that she is right, she takes the whole of the types composing the word, and places them upon or in contact with the pencil, or whatever the object may be.’

“The whole of the succeeding year was passed in gratifying her eager inquiries for the names of every object which she could possibly handle : in exercising her in the use of the manual alphabet ; in extending in every possible way her knowledge of the physical relations of things ; and in proper care of her health.

“At the end of the year a report of her case was made, from which the following is an extract :

“ ‘It has been ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, that she cannot see a ray of light, cannot hear the least sound, and never exercises her sense of smell, if she have any. Thus

her mind dwells in darkness and stillness as profound as that of a closed tomb at midnight. Of beautiful sights, and sweet sounds, and pleasant odors she has no conception ; nevertheless, she seems as happy and playful as a bird or a lamb ; and the employment of her intellectual faculties, or the acquirement of a new idea, gives her a vivid pleasure, which is plainly marked in her expressive features. She never seems to repine, but has all the buoyancy and gayety of childhood. She is fond of fun and frolic, and when playing with the rest of the children, her shrill laugh sounds loudest of the group.

“ ‘ When left alone, she seems very happy if she have her knitting or sewing, and will busy herself for hours : if she have no occupation, she evidently amuses herself by imaginary dialogues, or by recalling past impressions ; she counts with her fingers, or spells out names of things which she has recently learned, in the manual alphabet of the deaf-mutes. In this lonely self-communion she seems to reason, reflect, and argue ; if she spell a word wrong with the fingers of her right hand, she instantly strikes it with her left, as her teacher does, in sign of disapprobation ; if right, then she pats herself upon the head and looks pleased. She sometimes purposely spells a word wrong with the left hand, looks roguish for a moment and laughs, and then with the right hand strikes the left, as if to correct it.

“ ‘ During the year she has attained great dexterity in the use of the manual alphabet of the deaf-mutes ; and she spells out the words and sentences which she knows, so fast and so deftly, that only those accustomed to this language can follow with the eye the rapid motions of her fingers.

“ ‘ But wonderful as is the rapidity with which she writes her thoughts upon the air, still more so is the ease and accuracy with which she reads the words thus written by another ; grasping their hands in hers, and following every movement of their fingers, as letter after letter conveys their meaning to her mind. It is in this way that she converses with her blind playmates, and nothing can more forcibly show the power of mind in forc-

ing matter to its purpose than a meeting between them. For if great talent and skill are necessary for two pantomimes to paint their thoughts and feelings by the movements of the body, and the expression of the countenance, how much greater the difficulty when darkness shrouds them both, and the one can hear no sound !

“ ‘ When Laura is walking through a passage-way, with her hands spread before her, she knows instantly every one she meets, and passes them with a sign of recognition ; but if it be a girl of her own age, and especially if it be one of her favorites, there is instantly a bright smile of recognition, and a twining of arms, a grasping of hands, and a swift telegraphing upon the tiny fingers, whose rapid evolutions convey the thoughts and feelings from the outposts of one mind to those of the other. There are questions and answers, exchanges of joy or sorrow, there are kissings and partings, just as between little children with all their senses.’ ”

“ During this year, and six months after she had left home, her mother came to visit her, and the scene of their meeting was an interesting one.

“ The mother stood some time, gazing with overflowing eyes upon her unfortunate child, who, all unconscious of her presence, was playing about the room. Presently Laura ran against her, and at once began feeling her hands, examining her dress, and trying to find out if she knew her ; but not succeeding in this, she turned away as from a stranger, and the poor woman could not conceal the pang she felt at finding that her beloved child did not know her.

“ She then gave Laura a string of beads which she used to wear at home, which were recognized by the child at once, who with much joy put them around her neck, and sought me eagerly to say she understood the string was from her home.

“ The mother now tried to caress her, but poor Laura repelled her, preferring to be with her acquaintances.

“ Another article from home was now given her, and she began to look much interested ; she examined the stranger

much closer, and gave me to understand that she knew she came from Hanover ; she even endured her caresses, but would leave her with indifference at the slightest signal. The distress of the mother was now painful to behold ; for, although she had feared that she should not be recognized, the painful reality of being treated with cold indifference by a darling child was too much for woman's nature to bear.

“After a while, on the mother taking hold of her again, a vague idea seemed to flit across Laura's mind that this could not be a stranger : she therefore felt her hands very eagerly, while her countenance assumed an expression of intense interest ; she became very pale, and then suddenly red ; hope seemed struggling with doubt and anxiety, and never were contending emotions more strongly painted upon the human face. At this moment of painful uncertainty, the mother drew her close to her side, and kissed her fondly, when at once the truth flashed upon the child, and all mistrust and anxiety disappeared from her face, as, with an expression of exceeding joy, she eagerly nestled to the bosom of her parent, and yielded herself to her fond embraces.

“After this, the beads were all unheeded, the playthings which were offered to her were utterly disregarded ; her playmates, for whom but a moment before she gladly left the stranger, now vainly strove to pull her from her mother ; and, though she yielded her usual instantaneous obedience to my signal to follow me, it was evidently with painful reluctance. She clung close to me, as if bewildered and fearful ; and when, after a moment, I took her to her mother, she sprang to her arms, and clung to her with eager joy.

“The subsequent parting between them showed alike the affection, the intelligence, and the resolution of the child.

“Laura accompanied her mother to the door, clinging close to her all the way, until they arrived at the threshold, where she paused, and felt around to ascertain who was near her. Perceiving the matron, of whom she is very fond, she grasped her with one hand, holding on convulsively to her mother with

the other ; and thus she stood for a moment ; then she dropped her mother's hand, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and, turning round, clung sobbing to the matron, while her mother departed, with emotions as deep as those of her child.

IN the labor department every patient is as freely trusted with the tools of his trade as if he were a sane man. In the garden and on the farm they work with spades, rakes, and hoes. For amusement they walk, run, fish, paint, read, and ride out to take the air in carriages provided for the purpose. They have among themselves a sewing-society to make clothes for the poor, which holds meetings, passes resolutions, never comes to fisticuffs or bowie-knives, as sane assemblies have been known to do elsewhere, and conducts all its proceedings with the greatest decorum. The irritability which would otherwise be expended on their own flesh, clothes, and furniture is dissipated in these pursuits. They are cheerful, tranquil, and healthy.

THE weekly charge in this establishment for each female patient is three dollars, or twelve shillings English ; but no girl employed by any of the corporations is ever excluded for want of the means of payment. That they do not very often want the means may be gathered from the fact, that in July, 1841, no fewer than nine hundred and seventy-eight of these girls were depositors in the Lowell Savings Bank ; the amount of whose joint savings was estimated at one hundred thousand dollars, or twenty thousand English pounds.

I am now going to state three facts which will startle a large class of readers on this side of the Atlantic very much.

Firstly, there is a joint-stock piano in a great many of the boarding-houses. Secondly, nearly all these young ladies subscribe to circulating libraries. Thirdly, they have got up

among themselves a periodical called *THE LOWELL OFFERING*, "A repository of original articles written exclusively by females actively employed in the mills,"—which is duly printed, published, and sold: and whereof I brought away from Lowell four hundred good solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end.

I VERY much questioned within myself, as I walked through the Insane Asylum, whether I should have known the attendants from the patients, but for the few words which passed between the former and the Doctor, in reference to the persons under their charge. Of course I limit this remark merely to their looks; for the conversation of the mad people was mad enough.

There was one little prim old lady, of very smiling and good-humored appearance, who came sidling up to me from the end of a long passage, and, with a courtesy of inexpressible condescension, propounded this unaccountable inquiry:

"Does Pontefract still flourish, sir, upon the soil of England?"

"He does, ma'am," I rejoined.

"When you last saw him, sir, he was—"

"Well, ma'am," said I, "extremely well. He begged me to present his compliments. I never saw him looking better."

At this the old lady was very much delighted. After glancing at me for a moment, as if to be quite sure that I was serious in my respectful air, she sidled back some paces, sidled forward again, made a sudden skip (at which I precipitately retreated a step or two); and said:

"I am an antediluvian, sir."

I thought the best thing to say was, that I had suspected as much from the first. Therefore I said so.

"It is an extremely proud and pleasant thing, sir, to be an antediluvian," said the old lady.

"I should think it was, ma'am," I rejoined.

The old lady kissed her hand, gave another skip, smirked and sidled down the gallery in a most extraordinary manner, and ambled gracefully into her own bedchamber.

“PRAY, why do they call this place the Tombs?”

“Well, it’s the cant name.”

“I know it is. Why?”

“Some suicides happened here when it was first built. I expect it came about from that.”

“I saw, just now, that that man’s clothes were scattered about the floor of his cell. Don’t you oblige the prisoners to be orderly, and put such things away?”

“Where should they put ’em?”

“Not on the ground, surely. What do you say to hanging them up?”

He stops and looks round to emphasize his answer:—

“Why, I say that’s just it. When they had hooks, they *would* hang themselves, so they’re taken out of every cell, and there’s only the marks left where they used to be!”

HERE is a solitary swine lounging homeward by himself. He has only one ear, having parted with the other to vagrant dogs in the course of his city rambles. But he gets on very well without it, and leads a roving, gentlemanly, vagabond kind of life, somewhat answering to that of our club men at home. He leaves his lodgings every morning at a certain hour, throws himself upon the town, gets through his day in some manner quite satisfactory to himself, and regularly appears at the door of his own house again at night like the mysterious master of *Gil Blas*. He is a free-and-easy, careless, indifferent kind of pig, having a very large acquaintance among other pigs of the same character, whom he rather knows by sight than conversation, as he seldom troubles himself to stop and exchange civilities, but goes grunting down the kennel, turning

up the news and small-talk of the city in the shape of cabbage-stalks and offal, and bearing no tails but his own, which is a very short one, for his old enemies the dogs have been at that too, and have left him hardly enough to swear by. He is in every respect a republican pig, going wherever he pleases, and mingling with the best society on an equal if not superior footing, for every one makes way when he appears, and the haughtiest give him the wall if he prefer it. He is a great philosopher, and seldom moved unless by the dogs before mentioned. Sometimes, indeed, you may see his small eye twinkling on a slaughtered friend, whose carcass garnishes a butcher's door-post; but he grunts out, "Such is life; all flesh is pork!" buries his nose in the mire again, and waddles down the gutter, comforting himself with the reflection that there is one snout the less to anticipate stray cabbage-stalks, at any rate.

THE terrible crowd with which these halls and galleries were filled so shocked me, that I abridged my stay within the shortest limits, and declined to see that portion of the building in which the refractory and violent were under closer restraint. I have no doubt that the gentleman who presided over this establishment at the time I write of was competent to manage it, and had done all in his power to promote its usefulness; but will it be believed that the miserable strife of Party feeling is carried even into this sad refuge of afflicted and degraded humanity? Will it be believed that the eyes which are to watch over and control the wanderings of minds on which the most dreadful visitation to which our nature is exposed has fallen, must wear the glasses of some wretched side in Politics? Will it be believed that the governor of such a house as this is appointed and deposed and changed perpetually, as Parties fluctuate and vary, and as their despicable weathercocks are blown this way or that? A hundred times in every week some new most paltry exhibition of that narrow-minded and injurious Party Spirit which is the Simoom of America, sickening and

blighting everything of wholesome life within its reach, was forced upon my notice ; but I never turned my back upon it, with feelings of such deep disgust and measureless contempt as when I crossed the threshold of this mad-house.

HEAVEN save the ladies, how they dress ! We have seen more colors in these ten minutes than we should have seen elsewhere in as many days. What various parasols ! what rainbow silks and satins ! what pinking of thin stockings, and pinching of thin shoes, and fluttering of ribbons and silk tassels, and display of rich cloaks with gaudy hoods and linings ! The young gentlemen are fond, you see, of turning down their shirt-collars and cultivating their whiskers, especially under the chin ; but they cannot approach the ladies in their dress or bearing, being, to say the truth, humanity of quite another sort.

AS Washington may be called the head-quarters of tobacco-tinctured saliva, the time is come when I must confess, without any disguise, that the prevalence of those two odious practices of chewing and expectorating began about this time to be anything but agreeable, and soon became most offensive and sickening. In all the public places of America this filthy custom is recognized. In the courts of law the judge has his spittoon, the crier his, the witness his, and the prisoner his ; while the jurymen and spectators are provided for, as so many men who in the course of nature must desire to spit incessantly. In the hospitals the students of medicine are requested, by notices upon the wall, to eject their tobacco-juice into the boxes provided for that purpose, and not to discolor the stairs. In public buildings, visitors are implored, through the same agency, to squirt the essence of their quids, or “plugs,” as I have heard them called by gentlemen learned in this kind of sweetmeat, into the national spittoons, and not

about the bases of the marble columns. But in some parts this custom is inseparably mixed up with every meal and morning call, and with all the transactions of social life. The stranger who follows in the track I took myself will find it in its full bloom and glory, luxuriant in all its alarming recklessness, at Washington. And let him not persuade himself (as I once did, to my shame), that previous tourists have exaggerated its extent. The thing itself is an exaggeration of nastiness which cannot be outdone.

On board this steam-boat there were two young gentlemen, with shirt-collars reversed as usual, and armed with very big walking-sticks, who planted two seats in the middle of the deck, at a distance of some four paces apart, took out their tobacco-boxes, and sat down opposite each other to chew. In less than a quarter of an hour's time, these hopeful youths had shed about them on the clean boards a copious shower of yellow rain; clearing, by that means, a kind of magic circle, within whose limits no intruders dared to come, and which they never failed to refresh and re-refresh, before a spot was dry. This being before breakfast, rather disposed me, I confess, to nausea; but looking attentively at one of the expectorators, I plainly saw that he was young in chewing, and felt inwardly uneasy himself. A glow of delight came over me at this discovery; and as I marked his face turn paler and paler, and saw the ball of tobacco in his left cheek quiver with his suppressed agony, while yet he spat and chewed and spat again, in emulation of his older friend, I could have fallen on his neck and implored him to go on for hours.

THE Senate is a dignified and decorous body, and its proceedings are conducted with much gravity and order. Both houses are handsomely carpeted; but the state to which these carpets are reduced by the universal disregard of the spittoon with which every honorable member is accommodated, and the extraordinary improvements on the pattern

which are squirted and dabbled upon it in every direction, do not admit of being described. I will merely observe, that I strongly recommend all strangers not to look at the floor : and if they happen to drop anything, though it be their purse, not to pick it up with an ungloved hand on any account.

It is somewhat remarkable too, at first, to say the least, to see so many honorable members with swelled faces ; and it is scarcely less remarkable to discover that this appearance is caused by the quantity of tobacco they contrive to stow within the hollow of the cheek. It is strange enough, too, to see an honorable gentleman leaning back in his tilted chair, with his legs on the desk before him, shaping a convenient “plug” with his penknife, and when it is quite ready for use, shooting the old one from his mouth, as from a pop-gun ; and clapping the new one in its place.

I was surprised to observe that even steady old chewers of great experience are not always good marksmen, which has rather inclined me to doubt that general proficiency with the rifle of which we have heard so much in England. Several gentlemen called upon me who, in the course of conversation, frequently missed the spittoon at five paces, and one (but he was certainly short-sighted) mistook the closed sash for the open window, at three. On another occasion, when I dined out, and was sitting with two ladies and some gentlemen round a fire before dinner, one of the company fell short of the fire-place, six distinct times. I am disposed to think, however, that this was occasioned by his not aiming at that object, as there was a white-marble hearth before the fender, which was more convenient, and may have suited his purpose better.

IN the negro car belonging to the train in which we made this journey were a mother and her children who had just been purchased ; the husband and father being left behind with their old owner. The children cried the whole way, and the mother was misery's picture. The Champion of Life, Liberty,

and the Pursuit of Happiness, who had bought them, rode in the same train, and, every time we stopped, got down to see that they were safe. The black in Sinbad's Travels, with one eye in the middle of his forehead which shone like a burning coal, was nature's aristocrat compared with this white gentleman.

THERE are few words which perform such various duties as this word "fix." It is the Caleb Quotem of the American vocabulary. You call upon a gentleman in a country town, and his help informs you that he is "fixing himself" just now, but will be down directly ; by which you are to understand that he is dressing. You inquire, on board a steamboat, of a fellow-passenger, whether breakfast will be ready soon, and he tells you he should think so, for when he was last below they were "fixing the tables," in other words, laying the cloth. You beg a porter to collect your luggage, and he entreats you not to be uneasy, for he'll "fix it presently ;" and if you complain of indisposition, you are advised to have recourse to Doctor so-and-so, who will "fix you" in no time.

One night I ordered a bottle of mulled wine at an hotel where I was staying, and waited a long time for it ; at length it was put upon the table with an apology from the landlord that he feared it wasn't "fixed properly." And I recollect once, at a stage-coach dinner, overhearing a very stern gentleman demand of a waiter who presented him with a plate of underdone roast beef "whether he called *that* fixing God A'mighty's vittles."

CANT as we may, and as we shall to the end of all things, it is very much harder for the poor to be virtuous than it is for the rich ; and the good that is in them shines the brighter for it. In many a noble mansion lives a man, the best of husbands and of fathers, whose private worth in both capacities is

justly lauded to the skies. But bring him here, upon this crowded deck. Strip from his fair young wife her silken dress and jewels, unbind her braided hair, stamp early wrinkles on her brow, pinch her pale cheek with care and much privation, array her faded form in coarsely patched attire, let there be nothing but his love to set her forth or deck her out, and you shall put it to the proof indeed. So change his station in the world, that he shall see in those young things who climb about his knee, not records of his wealth and name, but little wrestlers with him for his daily bread, so many poachers on his scanty meal, so many units to divide his every sum of comfort, and further to reduce its small amount. In lieu of the endearments of childhood in its sweetest aspect, heap upon him all its pains and wants, its sicknesses and ills, its fretfulness, caprice, and querulous endurance ; let its prattle be not of engaging infant fancies, but of cold and thirst and hunger ; and if his fatherly affection outlive all this, and he be patient, watchful, tender, careful of his children's lives, and mindful always of their joys, and sorrows, then send him back to Parliament, and Pulpit, and to Quarter Sessions, and when he hears fine talk of the depravity of those who live from hand to mouth, and labor hard to do it, let him speak up, as one who knows, and tell those holders forth that they, by parallel with such a class, should be High Angels in their daily lives, and lay but humble siege to Heaven at last.

Which of us shall say what he would be, if such realities, with small relief or change all through his days, were his ! Looking round upon these people, far from home, houseless, indigent, wandering, weary with travel and hard living, and seeing how patiently they nursed and tended their young children ; how they consulted over their wants first, then half supplied their own ; what gentle ministers of hope and faith the women were ; how the men profited by their example ; and how very, very seldom even a moment's petulance or harsh complaint broke out among them,—I felt a stronger love and honor of my kind come glowing on my heart, and wished to God there

had been many Atheists in the better part of human nature there to read this simple lesson in the book of Life.

I CANNOT, I confess, incline towards the Shakers, view them with much favor, or extend towards them any very lenient construction. I so abhor and from my soul detest that bad spirit, no matter by what class or sect it may be entertained, which would strip life of its healthful graces, rob youth of its innocent pleasures, pluck from maturity and age their pleasant ornaments, and make existence but a narrow path towards the grave ; that odious spirit which, if it could have had full scope and sway upon the earth, must have blasted and made barren the imaginations of the greatest men, and left them, in their power of raising up enduring images before their fellow-creatures yet unborn, no better than the beasts ; that in these very broad-brimmed hats and very sombre coats—in stiff-necked, solemn-visaged piety, in short, no matter what its garb, whether it have cropped hair as in a Shaker village, or long nails as in a Hindoo temple—I recognize the worst among the enemies of Heaven and Earth, who turn the water at the marriage-feasts of this poor world, not into wine, but gall. And if there must be peopled vowed to crush the harmless fancies and the love of innocent delights and gayeties, which are a part of human nature,—as much a part of it as any other love or hope that is our common portion,—let them, for me, stand openly revealed among the ribald and licentious ; the very idiots know that *they* are not on the Immortal road, and will despise them, and avoid them readily.

ON the fourth night after leaving Louisville we reached St. Louis, and here I witnessed the conclusion of an incident, trifling enough in itself, but very pleasant to see, which had interested me during the whole journey.

There was a little woman on board with a little baby ; and both little woman and little child were cheerful, good-looking, bright-eyed, and fair to see. The little woman had been passing a long time with her sick mother in New York, and had left her home in St. Louis in that condition in which ladies who truly love their lords desire to be. The baby was born in her mother's house, and she had not seen her husband (to whom she was now returning) for twelve months, having left him a month or two after their marriage.

Well, to be sure there never was a little woman so full of hope and tenderness, and love, and anxiety, as this little woman was ; and all day long she wondered whether " He " would be at the wharf, and whether " He " had got her letter, and whether, if she sent the baby ashore by somebody else, " He " would know it, meeting it in the street ; which, seeing that he had never set eyes upon it in his life, was not very likely in the abstract, but was probable enough to the young mother. She was such an artless little creature, and was in such a sunny, beaming, hopeful state, and let out all this matter clinging close about her heart so freely, that all the other lady passengers entered into the spirit of it as much as she ; and the captain (who heard all about it from his wife) was wondrous sly, I promise you, inquiring every time we met at table, as in forgetfulness, whether she expected anybody to meet her at St. Louis, and whether she would want to go ashore the night we reached it (but she supposed he wouldn't), and cutting many other dry jokes of that nature. There was one little, weazen, dried-apple-faced old woman, who took occasion to doubt the constancy of husbands in such circumstances of bereavement ; and there was another lady (with a lapdog) old enough to moralize on the lightness of human affections, and yet not so old that she could help nursing the baby now and then, or laughing with the rest when the little woman called it by its father's name, and asked it all manner of fantastic questions concerning him in the joy of her heart.

It was something of a blow to the little woman, that, when we were within twenty miles of our destination, it became clearly necessary to put this baby to bed. But she got over it with the same good-humor, tied a handkerchief round her head, and came out into the little gallery with the rest. Then such an oracle as she became in reference to the localities ! and such facetiousness as was displayed by the married ladies ! and such sympathy as was shown by the single ones ! and such peals of laughter as the little woman herself (who would just as soon have cried) greeted every jest with !

AT last there were the lights of St. Louis, and here was the wharf, and those were the steps, and the little woman covering her face with her hands, and laughing (or seeming to laugh) more than ever, ran into her own cabin, and shut herself up. I have no doubt that, in the charming inconsistency of such excitement, she stopped her ears, lest she should hear “Him” asking for her, but I did not see her do it.

Then a great crowd of people rushed on board, though the boat was not yet made fast, but was wandering about, among the other boats, to find a landing-place, and everybody looked for the husband, and nobody saw him, when, in the midst of us all—Heaven knows how she ever got there—there was the little woman clinging with both arms tight round the neck of a fine, good-looking, sturdy young fellow ! and in a moment afterwards, there she was again, actually clapping her little hands for joy, as she dragged him through the small door of her small cabin to look at the baby as he lay asleep !

NOR did I ever once, on any occasion, anywhere, during my rambles in America, see a woman exposed to the slightest act of rudeness, incivility, or even inattention.

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